

Appendix 6 –Written responses to first round of consultation

Comment
<p>I feel neighbourhood working in the Birchwood area has been unnoticed.</p> <p>Residents often comment that there are no facilities for children, especially younger children as the only play area is over a busy road at the Birchwood Leisure Centre. The play equipment there is suitable for older children. There is no under 5's play equipment anywhere in the area. Residents have to take younger children to North Hykeham or Hartsholme Park.</p> <p>Diamond Park (Staverton Crescent) was used by families in the area for younger children but this has been closed for some time as the equipment is out of date. This was set up by a church group.</p> <p>As far as I am aware there has been no evidence of improvements to benefit residents the Birchwood area.</p>
<p>My only comment is that I hope housing revenue funding to the project is in line with areas they are working in and we have housing.</p> <p>It would be helpful if we have a remit of what work they are undertaking as this has always been vague in the past.</p>
<p>I would like to voice my thoughts on the closure on the neighbourhood teams – especially the North Neighbourhood Office.</p> <p>I understand the reasoning behind the closure of these offices, however, I believe that losing them could impact greatly on the local community and goes against everything that the new Vision 2020 policy stands for.</p> <p>The North Neighbourhood Team has supported many of my residents on the Ermine West. I have had numerous tenants who were/are desperately in need of support, whether it is with reporting basic repairs to getting assistance with food and heating, all of which have been sign posted to the Neighbourhood Team. I appreciate that there are other organisations that can do some of these things but none of them are as reliable or dedicated then these teams – and none of these represent the City of Lincoln Council.</p> <p>Removing these offices would remove the last Council office buildings from the estates. Residents know that if they need 'the Council' they can attend these offices, especially those who cannot afford buses to City Hall, phones or the internet. All residents that I have sign posted to the office have always had extremely positive feedback, in addition to this, it re-enforces the trust and the notion that the Council is actively helping in the community.</p>
<p>Fully support the proposed changes in terms of the job roles within the team(s) but opposed to moving all resources into the Sincil Bank/Monks Rd area. The south and north teams have done great work over the years. These communities are not any more enabled than the central area. Arguably less so as</p>

more money and resources, not just City Council, are continually ploughed into Park and especially Abbey ward than any other area of deprivation.

I can speak as a person who worked within Neighbourhood Working and as an internal partner through Housing. The true impact over the years is not something that can easily be measured, but it is there. I am in favour of a narrower focus rather than a broad vision with unspecific targets, but this should be applied to the current areas not reduced to one. It would be a loss to those communities I am sure of it.

Furthermore, whatever happens, I would hope the proposed restructure isn't just the first phase of a full exit strategy. I'm against the "better than nothing" position anyway, but it would be a sad state if the coming years see the complete removal of Neighbourhood Working. Hard to get rid of three teams in one pop; much easier to get rid of one team in the future. Especially when it will be so easy to demonstrate that other services and resources exist within the proposed area to pick up the slack anyway. Which is again just another reason that Park/Abbey should not be the primary focus for Neighbourhood Working.

I, as I am sure most staff are, am also opposed to the job losses the restructure would force.

I have lived and worked on the Ermine East for over 22 years and I can appreciate the change that the 'NWS' has had on St Giles; most of the problems on St Giles spill over to the Ermine. While I understand the need to achieve the same in other areas of the City; is it wise to remove the service on the other 2 areas completely? Will it not make more sense to have 2 teams; one concentrating on the area identified and the other sharing the time between the St Giles and the Moorland areas. If we pull out the service completely we end up where we were before; more antisocial behaviour, rubbish dumped everywhere, and nobody will want to live on these estates. Please re-consider and let's build on what we have achieved not destroy it. The proposed review looks to me like robbing Peter to pay Paul.

I would like to voice my objections to the closure of the Neighbourhood Office in the North for the following reasons:

Obvious reasons:

Goes against the 2020 **"Reduce Inequality"** – by reducing services to the North of the City.

Goes against the Core Value – **"Be approachable"** – it has taken 10 years to build to the current position. A place where residents can come and get advice, support and practical help.

Goes against the Core Value – **"Be trusted"** – Residents know that they can visit the Office and be respected and all information is treated as confidential and acted on.

Objections that I have which will make life more difficult for residents and myself.

You will see an increase in ASB because the Estate will return to how it was 10 years ago without the visible presence and contact point of Police, Estate Caretaker and Housing Officers.

You will see a decline in the condition of the Estates – No reporting point for Tenants or visits by the Estate Caretaker.

You will see a decline in the property condition – No reporting point for repairs.

You will see an **INCREASE** in the rent arrears on the Estate- no point to speak to Housing Officer, apply for jobs, apply for benefits and get assistance with benefits.

You will see an increase in poverty on the Estate – lack of support and monitoring of those in mental and physical need.

The current office provides a HUB:

A phone which can be used for all matters – Those on low income do not have internet or mobile phones or money to get a bus into the City. Many are not physically able to walk. There is a perception that everyone has a phone with internet access which is not correct.

Computers – Those on low income do have access to internet to apply for jobs, benefit and access to all services.

Advice – All matters through staff at the Office including benefit welfare.

Food and Emergency supplies – Residents are found to be without food, benefits and power on a regular basis. The Office always provide emergency assistance for all the North estates.

Reinforces a sense of community – Through many, many events from Job clubs to Summer Fete.

A point I can go to for access to services which Housing Officers do not have access to on the Estate – computer, parking etc.

Whilst I understand that money dictates what we can and cannot do, is there a way we can continue to provide this HUB in the North of the City?

What is happening to the Police North Box on Pine Close, Ermine East? Can we use this?

How short-sighted is this ? Has anyone actually sat down and thought about the long-term repercussions? Please read my comments. At the moment I do not need the majority many services available through the Neighbourhood Team, but I may well do in the future. So few of the residents on St. Giles, and I assume the other areas, have even been told about these cut-backs, how is it possible to even think about a 'public consultation'? It is the most vulnerable of our residents (those who the Government have promised to help), who will be most affected by this type of cut-back, and who will suffer.

Point one..... In relation to the proposal to reduce the service down to one, targeting the Park Ward/Sincil Street area.

Neighbourhood working in its current form is far from being able and set up to tackle the Ward wide issues that Park and Sincil Bank present. This is predominately an area dominated with private housing and rented accommodation. Most of the Neighbourhood Teams are used to working with a high percentage of Council Tenants. Most of the present staff would need additional training to change the way they work, and to incorporate a different way of thinking about how to start engaging with the residents of Park Ward.

Point two.....Lifting people out of poverty is an exceptionally important aspect and should be considered in the whole scheme of things, but in order to be able to begin this process, 'Funding' is the biggest problem. Training providers have over the last two years, struggled massively to stay in business. This includes Abbey Access and Devolvment Plus. With further County Council cuts to the funding of Youth provision and Health and Well-being, Health Improvement Service and Community Grants how is this going to be possible. Unless there is a well-supported training provision located locally, encouraging your residents to access this service, starts with getting to know your residents first.

Points three and four.....These two really go together, the insistence that Neighbourhood working revolves around the Neighbourhood Board is very narrow minded. The Neighbourhood Board represents a small hand full of dedicated residents that put passion, time and energy to providing a community group for a small percentage of residents, covering various subjects and interests. These people meet up once a month with the other Agencies to discuss their community issues and plan events. Neighbourhood working is far greater than the Boards alone, the Office is a Community Hub that is open 5 days a week. They have a land line direct to the Council or DWP, they have internet access and they are 'real people' that the residents know they can turn to. They are also a sobering hands on, direct access to what's going on within the Community, ASB, knowledge of the severely vulnerable and a distribution point for Food Larder Vouchers and food for the desperately in need. As for internet access, there is still a large percentage of vulnerable people that don't have access to the internet, knowledge of how to use it. As un-comprehensible as it is for some people to understand, not everybody actually even wants to even engage with computers. These vulnerable people will undoubtedly become more isolated without a real person to turn to in their hour of need.

Point five.....Much of this point has been raised within the previous points. The Neighbourhood Boards are made up of members of the Community, they already volunteer their time and energy in running their own groups. The Board's Chair is generally already a member of the Community, but those individual's don't have the personal capacity to undertake and run the Neighbourhood Board, with or without training this isn't going to work !! Support and supervision will always be needed in some shape or form. Volunteering in general is and always will be a time limited option, not everybody is able to volunteer for an unlimited amount of years. DWP pressures to move into the 'actually employed' sector is a constant factor, that must be taken into consideration. Stability in ensuring that the Neighbourhood Board has a sensible point of contact and encouragement to continue.

Point six.....Without meaning to be condescending, some of the people that run their own groups struggle to manage this with the limited knowledge and skills that they have. To consider and expect them to be able to increase this input and again offload responsibility onto other residents to take the leading role within their community is quite a task in itself. A major recruitment drive for more volunteers/interested residents would be needed for starters.

Point seven.....Removal of the Caretaker role !!! As mentioned in previous comments, removing the 'real person' that all residents are able to turn to for a long list of support and not just for reporting environmental issues and repairs would be going against aspects of the 2020 Vision, 'helping and supporting the deprived and vulnerable residents of Lincoln'. There is capacity to develop a supportive role, although the Caretaker already undertakes certain aspects of this already. It would depend on what these projects are and it sounds to me like it would cover very large area of working. Where is the definition?? Which or What work streams?? Would this be covering just one area or redefining the present Neighbourhood Working model. The last few words make it

sound like a 'go between' the residents and the agencies or third sector groups willing to step in and support the residents within a designated area. I would also like to raise that funding issue again and third sector groups, that also rely heavily on volunteers because they don't have the funds to pay wages. Point eight.....Directorate of Housing and Regeneration. Yes.....the HRA already contributes a sizable financial figure into Neighbourhood working, it does make sense to develop this further. Although, Neighbourhood working is a totally separate subject matter to that of Regeneration !! Yes, regeneration does involve a small aspect of Neighbourhood working, but to really regenerate an area that is predominately non Council Residents, it would revolve around a completely different way of working not familiar to those currently working within the NW Teams (as previously mentioned). Personally I don't have anything against the Regeneration plans, this area of the City is desperately in need of it. But I don't think it should be to the detriment of our Estates and our vulnerable social housing residents. Reduce the present NW to an affordable level that still supports the most deprived areas of our City within the HRA Budget and introduce a Regeneration Team that is separate and geared around that subject only.

Point nine.....Real estate ! Reducing the cost of keeping open old and expensive buildings that are under used would reduce the overall budget for NW, but an alternative option of increasing the use and resources of our Community Centre's should be looked at, or at least costed. A North and South Team leader with a full time Neighbourhood Support Officer, with a part time or trainee admin assistant position. Computer/'s and phone line is essential, space for training within the local Community with the help and support of training providers. Basic Food Hygiene, Manual Handling, Health and Safety, First Aid goes a long way in applying for Job's, but accessing these is difficult. Safeguarding even, DBS checks. Meeting room space is essential, I could go on and on.

Point ten.....Not applicable, except as a City Councillor we are and should be a point of access for support and assistance. However, due to the numerous groups and forum's that we are expected to be connected with across the City, being heavily involved with supporting the Neighbourhood Board in any admin duties would be near impossible for most Councillors.

Point eleven.....Again not really applicable. But I would like to offer my observations from the two Neighbourhood Board meeting's that I have attended. The St Giles Board members were absolutely devastated !! Some members were in tears, feeling desolate and abandoned by the City Council. In future a little more sensitivity should be applied to any proposed changes within the Community. The residents felt like they had literally been hit by a bulldozer during a period of Festive happiness, not much of a Happy New Year to them with the proposals. The other Ermine East and West Board, unfortunately there was a change of meeting date and attendance was very low. But as explained during the all member briefing 'all of those present felt it was pointless in responding to the Consultation as DECISIONS HAVE ALREADY BEEN MADE !!'

I think these proposals came as a huge shock not just to Neighbourhood Boards but also to myself and fellow councillors because as far as I can recall there has never been any discussion at the Board meetings I attended that they should have been working towards being self- sustaining. I think the majority will find it too difficult and may fold.

I fully appreciate the financial constraints we are working under but it is a pity that the proposals were not presented earlier in order to allow for a more

gradual transition towards being 'stand alone'. [...].

My main concern is how we make some transitional arrangements.

I do feel, that we cannot just walk away. We need to make some transitional arrangements and investigate what each board requires on an interim basis to allow it to continue to function. I do not think it will require a great deal of financial support to do this and I really do hope we can achieve this.

As you are aware Abbey does not have a Council owned community centre resource but it does have the Neighbourhood office. I wondered rather than disposing of the asset if keeping it and making it available to rent might be an option?

I am aware that the Neighbourhood Policing team only makes a small financial contribution but perhaps there are others out there that could and would rent the rest of the building as well as allowing the Police team to remain. It will be quite difficult operationally for the Police team to move especially as the proposals to close down West Parade and move to South Park are now going ahead.

Abbey area has a higher crime rate than the Sincil Bank area too as mentioned by Inspector Pat Coates at the recent Board meeting.

I am aware, for instance, that Dev + will be relocating soon but not sure if that has been finalised but they might have considered that building had it been available.....might not be too late?

If we got the right tenants in it might be possible to allow the community to hire rooms etc.

John East sent me a copy of the Boards response which I concur with so no need to repeat their comments.

I am disgusted by the proposals to scrap the neighbourhood working service in Bracebridge. This neighbourhood team has allowed my constituents, who live in a deeply deprived area the necessary channels to not only make positive change to their community, but to also allow residents to come together and achieve a positive change for the common good.

The proposals for the council to focus entirely on Sincil bank is insulting to my constituents who now feel that the council is turning its back on them.

Within your proposals I could not see the cost implications for altering this service and also I couldn't see any calculations to work out the cost to the tax payer in the long run when all the good work unravels. Please can I be told how much it costs the council to fund the Bracebridge neighbourhood board?

In the report it is mentioned that the working services have been running for over a decade and can become self sufficient. I want to argue that no such preparation has been made in Bracebridge. We do not have groups like there are in Birchwood and we do not currently have volunteers to run this neighbourhood panel itself.

The council needs to have a serious rethink. I am concerned that all the great work which Paul and his team have done in Bracebridge will unravel pretty quickly if funding is cut.

Has the council looked at alternatives? I.e cutting back officer time in an area but still maintain the service. For example, in Bracebridge we have a resident group and a board. Cutting it back to just a resident group should halve the costs (or at least officer time in the area).

From what I can see the council haven't made any effort in trying to maintain the service, and operating at a reduced rate would still be preferable to having no service at all.

The 2 areas you highlighted as the 2 major costs to the group are as I expected. However, in other parts of my patch the PCSO holds quarterly meetings with residents. To reduce the costs on this service, our PCC has made the meetings so a resident takes over the secretarial duties rather than the PCSO. Has this option been looked at in order to save officer time?

Finally, if the council really did care about the Manse and the issues they have they'd make sure that some sort of continuity of business plan is in place so that the group can survive after the council pulls out. Unfortunately I don't believe the Manse group is at a position where it can become self sufficient and it still needs attention.

Please don't think that I am being totally unreasonable, I appreciate that £20,000 is a lot of money. But cutting back the service completely and making no effort to cut costs first I believe is totally against the principles Lincoln Council stand for.

My involvement with the Sincil and Bracebridge boards over many years informs my views. I will not comment on the Sincil board as intensive work is planned.

I am concerned at the period of consultation the start seems to be from 23 December until 23 January meaning a significant period ran over Christmas I heard at the Bracebridge meeting on 17 January with local residents.

The plans provide no support for the continued operation of the board albeit with volunteers doing more. Why is it not possible for clerical support to be maintained to produce minutes , agendas ,book meetings rooms facilities at no cost.

Are the council expecting volunteers to do it all and bear the costs if so the board will struggle to continue.

Has the council approached voluntary bodies to give support with the city bearing some costs.(let me declare an involvement with three charities involved in such work) The work of the board with police may also suffer and plans for future neighbourhood involvement such as providing Christmas meals for the disadvantaged will founder.

The local community remembrance service drawing seventy plus residents in but needing support with community centre booking audio equipment and contacting local retailers for support with refreshments may also struggle.

I realise the poor local government settlement but withdrawal at the pace proposed will undo many years of good positive work with local residents.

Please reconsider the present plans and work with local people to seek alternative options.

Although we realise the proposed closure of Neighbourhood Offices is really down to financial desperation, we at the Lincoln Community Larder can see the excellent work that is done by the Neighbourhood Teams, in particular the St Giles Matters office and fear for the future of the St Giles area and the people living there if it were to close.

We do have a close relationship with St Giles Matters, for instance they are one of our major referring agencies. How would the loss of that facility impact on people in need, who would fill it? We cannot have people turn up at our door asking for food, all our customers need to be assessed and if necessary, action taken to address the underlying cause. We are not in a position to do this.

In the calendar year 2016 St Giles Matters made 233 referrals, ie 15.8% of the total. At our St Giles outreach the percentage of referrals made by St Giles Matters is far higher. Without this referrer I do not see how we could manage to deliver a decent level of service.

We also work with St Giles Matters to provide food in school holidays for families in need. In addition to the usual Larder vouchers they referred to us 90 adults and 117 children during this year's summer break.

What about the people who turn up at the door of the neighbourhood office saying they have not eaten for several days? We keep the office supplied with some basic foodstuffs to hand out in these situations, particularly Friday afternoons, when the Larder and Foodbanks are all closed.

So much valuable work is done by the team on St Giles to support vulnerable people and given that CAB no longer have an outreach in the area, these people will have nowhere to turn to.

Community view point

The below comments have been fed back to us directly from local residents and small community groups who regularly use the neighbourhood working services.

- The local community are greatly concerned that the sudden withdrawal of this service will have “disastrous” socio-economic consequences including; a breakdown in community cohesion; lack of information/ access to local services; lack of support for local groups and increased anti-social behaviour.
- They feel that (as evidenced by the local community action plans and evaluations) good, sustained progress has been made in community development throughout the duration of the neighbourhood working service and that this will be damaged/ lost by the sudden withdrawal of the service. It is felt that the withdrawal will cause miss-trust within the local community towards the council. There is a feeling that they are

being “drastically” let down.

- They are concerned about the loss of the other services that are housed in the neighbourhood offices including the police and citizen’s advice.

Voluntary Sector view point

- There is concern over both the up and downstream effects and the externalities of cost, which may not be immediately be apparent- e.g. the full return on investment and social investment that the service brings including- working together with the voluntary sector to secure additional funding for city projects; reducing costs relating to vandalism, petty crime and tenancy problems, support to mental health services, easing the strain on other services in the council.
- Whilst the voluntary sector has a lot of empathy and understanding about the impact of cuts and general lack of funding. There is a concern that the speed at which the decision to cut the service has been made and implemented means that there is insufficient time for proper succession planning.
- With adequate time to jointly draw up plans/ find solutions/ generate new funding local voluntary sector organisations would be willing and able to support the ongoing delivery of this service. This could potentially include local voluntary sector organisations (or a consortium thereof) taking on the running of the neighbourhood working buildings. Sadly, three months is an insufficient amount of time for the community sector/ neighbourhood boards to put alternative measures in place to cover some of the core functions of the service. Six to twelve months would be a much more workable time frame. There are many examples of public-voluntary sector partnerships within other councils around the UK. Setting up such partnerships with local voluntary sector organisations could be a successful way of ensuring that neighbourhood working continues to be effectual across the city- not just in one area.
- Without proper succession planning, the voluntary sector is likely to have to pick up the out-falling/ issues that arise through the withdrawal of this service anyway, but without adequate recognition or funding.
- There are concerns over the reduced scope of the issues that the service plans to cover. Employment and skills is an area which is already being well-funded through DWP, SFA, and Big Lottery matching £millions of ESF funding – so is it really the best use of CoLC’s limited resources, and will it result in them trying to duplicate work that is either already under way or about to launch as one of the new programmes?
- Offering opportunities for employment, rather than up-skilling people for employment is seen as a better use of resource. There is a current lack of

such opportunities.

- Green Synergy is willing to help support the service, where we can, in line with our remit and charitable objects.

At a recent Neighbourhood Board meeting to discuss this proposal the board members requested that I respond to you on their behalf. The general consensus of opinion was that this is not a consultation, because those the changes will affect the most, know nothing about it. Namely the areas covered by Neighbourhood working.

Why is it that you wish to dismantle the organization that has carried out, and is still carrying out, such good work within the existing areas? This is work that has taken 10 years or more to build to this standard. As each area has its own distinct problems and solutions, how can any one person, or one team, cover the whole of the city? Not only that, at the moment those living in each of the areas know where, and who, will be able to answer their questions and queries, or at the very least know who they can advise to help them. The offices in each of the areas are accessible to the residents, and usually pretty central. It is so important to maintain these areas of information and communication at a local estate level. It seems that your proposals to get people into employment, pathways for accessing skills and so on, is already done most effectively, and is covered by, the Neighbourhood Working Team, and is an excellent reason for keeping everyone.

The Neighbourhood Board is the contact between all the City Council Departments, County Council Departments, all the local agencies, local schools, local charities, and even the contact with commercial businesses such as Tesco. For the Neighbourhood Board to continue effectively, access to ALL of the teams and groups who currently support us, is vital and essential. This access is currently provided through the offices of a Neighbourhood Manager. Who do you propose to replace the Neighbourhood Manager, as without access to all of these departments, services, agencies etc., the Neighbourhood Board cannot work effectively?

Here on St. Giles, our Community Caretaker does far more than just report on environmental issues. She is a contact between the vulnerable residents, with perhaps mental and/or physical problems, and the services and agencies that can help them. She is known and trusted by the residents, as well as the agencies and charities and does an exceedingly important job helping to keep vulnerable residents in a safe environment, as well as keeping the estate in general, in good order.

Unfortunately, your proposal on the housing and regeneration, is rubbish. It is all 'if' and 'should'. It doesn't matter where the budget comes from or which department is in charge of it, as long as it is properly funded right across the City. This, does NOT say that it will actually happen.

A number of small groups on St. Giles, use the office space within the Neighbourhood Offices, for meetings, discussions etc., as they cannot afford to pay the rent for meeting space within the Community Centre. These small groups will have nowhere else to go, and as such the support they give to vulnerable, elderly and needy residents, will cease. The building is also currently used by agencies, such Councilor surgeries, benefits advice, C.A.B., and various campaign groups. The offices are also a hub for lots of different advice including jobs, health matters, national fund raising for various charities, housing – the list just goes on and on. What will happen to this?

It is quite correct that the Neighbourhood Teams have put in a great deal of work and effort to help residents to improve their areas. But this has only been possible, because it has been the Neighbourhood Managers who have been the driving force. Volunteers do not have the expertise, time or even access to

the departments within the City and County Council. Admin is one of the most important areas of any group, and takes an enormous amount of time, expertise and commitment. Volunteers cannot be expected to take over the responsibility of what is really a full-time job. It is so difficult to get volunteers at all, especially as the agencies (such as Development Plus) are having to fold or cut right back on their activities, due to cuts in funding. It seems as though everyone wants to have volunteers to do the work of what should be paid workers. Just where are these volunteers expected to come from? The Boards will require help not only financially (to cover admin, postage, room hire, refreshments and so on), but also for council contact. We need access to ALL Council Departments at any time. The Boards will lose the contacts that have already been in place for so long, and the Managers who have been the bridge between Council Departments and the city residents. You make no mention of where this funding will come from, when it will be paid, who can claim, in fact you do not give any firm commitment on any type of support for this volunteer army you expect to come out of the woodwork. In fact, the only residents who have received any contact from you about this so-called consultation, are those who meet regularly on Boards. In general, residents do not take kindly to change, and there is still a very large percentage of people who do not have/want to deal with electronic communications. Assumptions are being made yet again. Several members of our Board have commented that the appearance of this consultation document has been specifically tailored in its language and length, to discourage people from fill in your questionnaire. It was also felt that the date of commencement was deliberately chosen, 3 days before Christmas, to reduce the impact of response from residents and groups. The Board realizes that this whole process is due to lack of funding from Central Government, however, the general perception will be that the whole of this is the responsibility of the City Council.

Thank you for consulting Birchwood Big Local on the proposed changes to the Council's Neighbourhood Working Service. I am responding on behalf of the Partnership Board.

Whilst we appreciate being asked directly we are not aware of any consultation with the wider communities that will be affected by these proposals, only groups such as ours who have worked directly with their Neighbourhood Team.

It is also unfortunate that the consultation began just before the Christmas and New Year break and consequently we were not aware of it until Tuesday 3rd January 2017. This gave most consultees less than 3 weeks to respond, to meet a deadline of 9 am on a Monday. It is not clear why this short timescale is necessary to report to the Executive on 10th April.

The Partnership Board of Birchwood Big Local strongly disagree with the proposals to focus Neighbourhood Working on one area of the City only, for the following reasons.

Firstly the consultation document provides virtually no evidence of the degree of need that exists in the 8 existing areas. This should be assessed both to evaluate the impact of withdrawing the service from those areas and to decide which area(s) should be targeted if the regeneration scheme in the Park Ward/Sincil Bank area does not go ahead.

Data is readily available on the degree of deprivation and poverty in these areas using the Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2015. The Birchwood Big Local Area Profile, submitted to Local Trust nationally in 2015 showed, for instance, that:

- One area of Birchwood is in the top 1% most deprived (ranked 237th nationally) and another is in the top 10% (ranked 2397).
- In some areas of Birchwood, Income deprivation is in the top 2.5% and employment deprivation in the top 5%

- In one part of Birchwood, our child poverty rate is as high as 51.4%.

In addition average life expectancy is lower, there are more residents claiming Employment Support Allowance or Incapacity Benefit, child development is lower and a lower proportion of residents have qualifications.

So whilst the Birchwood Big Local area contains a range of housing types and tenure and general environment this should not mask considerable deprivation in parts of it, as great as any elsewhere in Lincoln.

The Partnership Board are very concerned about any reduction in Neighbourhood Working, but if a reduction to one team is still proposed they should provide as much support as possible to Birchwood as a high priority area. Given the ability to work remotely from City Hall provided by modern IT they could have someone working here for part of the week. This could include drop-in sessions for local residents and attending the most important meetings e.g. the Neighbourhood Board and the Big Local Partnership Board. This would be to keep in touch, be accountable to local people and make connections that support the community to develop their own solutions, not necessarily to provide administrative support.

We also disagree with focusing on just one priority, whether just in Park Ward or in more areas. Our extensive consultations with local people show that even people in the most deprived areas are concerned about their living environment and lack of facilities, not just acquiring skills and employment. Based on their views we developed four main priorities in the Birchwood Big Local Plan:

- ***Better use of our parks and green spaces***
- ***More activities and facilities for children and young people***
- ***More activities, events and facilities locally, particularly those which improve the sense of community***
- ***Community Safety***

Issues around poverty remain part of our vision, but the projects we are currently developing focus strongly on developing our green spaces to address the first three priorities, with incidental benefits for the fourth. As a group of resident volunteers these projects are taking up all our time, even with the support of a full time Community Project Manager. We simply do not have the capacity to take on other issues at the moment. Furthermore the residents who have volunteered to help develop green spaces do not have the interest or expertise to tackle economic issues such as poverty. Other organisations, especially Learning Communities, already provide advice, support and training to address those issues.

So we are particularly concerned that Birchwood Big Local is given as an example in asking the question: *“Is it time to withdraw from certain areas in any event and let other groups or organisations take the lead in their communities” ... ?*

It is not our role to use Big Lottery funding to cover gaps created by budget cuts. We could only access that funding once our Birchwood Big Local Plan was approved by Local Trust nationally a year ago, and only then for the specific priorities and projects outlined above. What is more, that funding is to be spent over a 10 year period, of which 9 years are left. We cannot speculate what will happen after that period. We are trying to ensure the long term viability of our current projects but there may be no funding for new ones.

We are very pleased to have a Community Project Manager, and an office about to be opened on 16th February, but at the moment both are only funded until the end of this year. The Partnership Board will decide whether to extend funding beyond then but can give no assurance that this capacity can be sustained for the full 10 years.

Finally, and as an example of the benefits of Neighbourhood Working, we want to record our heartfelt thanks to Caroline Hannah, her predecessor Jose Bruce, and Rachel Taylor for their unwavering support to Birchwood Big Local from the start. It should be appreciated that, quite unlike the normal process of organisations submitting bids, the Big Lottery Fund awarded £1 million each to 150 communities across England “out of the blue” but with the expectation that they would be supported to develop their own residents’ groups from scratch, consult their communities and draw up a Big Local Plan before they could draw down that funding. We could not have developed the Partnership Board without their support and hard work. We very much hope that their posts will remain in a re-organised structure. Birchwood as a community still needs support from Neighbourhood Working and we hope to be able to continue working with them.

This is a written response to the City Council’s consultation on Neighbourhood working. It is of great concern to us that the consultation was launched just a few days before Christmas 2016. This not only restricted the amount of time that could be devoted to a response but it would cause needless anxiety to those staff affected. Nothing was gained by not delaying until the New Year.

Additionally, it is usual to include an element of choice in such consultation. Here we are presented with a choice of one.

We believe that so much has been put into Neighbourhood Working in our community that the Council cannot simply walk away in the manner suggested. Residents have come to rely on help from the Belmont Office on all manner of issues such as ASB, contact with local police, fly tipping and advice on benefit issues, even if only for initial signposting.

We already know that residents are reluctant to make contact with city hall or report issues via 101 telephone services. Reporting levels are already very low and this change will mean an even lower reporting level. It is all very well to say that information is available on the City Council website for instance. That website is almost silent where telephone numbers are concerned and seems totally concentrated on email contact.

It must also be remembered that Abbey Ward has a considerable Eastern European population which can be difficult to engage. The Belmont office has been of value here also and while it is not the only means of contact, we need every opportunity in this matter.

The Police use the office as a local base in return for a small annual rental. It is difficult to see where they could be based if the office were to close. They have made a considerable commitment in security and communications and we cannot afford to lose this police presence when community policing is already under pressure. Crime and ASB are both seriously under recorded already and areas such as the Arboretum and Abbey Park attract a number of undesirable vagrants to the detriment of the area and use of the parks.

The continuance of the Belmont Office is vital to the residents of Abbey Ward. The fact that it has only been open on a limited basis for the last twelve months is simply down to lack of staff and any suggestion that usage has decline is simply misleading for this reason.

There are residents in Abbey, as there are elsewhere, to whom going to the local office is a major effort. A visit to City Hall is beyond them in such cases. They need a face which is familiar and which they can trust.

We understand that the annual running cost of the office is less than £5,000. Hardly a significant amount in the nature of things. Why not make use of the facility by actually transferring a small number of staff to make Belmont Office their base? They could deal with local queries as part of their duties.

Some years ago the Board held a series of small meetings with Service Heads to try to obtain a commitment to set their strategy to work in response to local needs rather than providing what they think is needed. In several cases this commitment was given but has never produced a positive outcome, and more work is needed. If a successful relationship could be built in this regard, it would result in less work for City Hall but a significant cultural change would be needed. We have also tried to convince officers that outplacing City Hall staff in the local office would greatly assist with their work.

The document mentions several alternative organisations to take on some of the work done in the local office. We wonder just how much research has been done to support such a view. Development Plus is one mentioned. They are in the process of closing their Croft Street premises! Lincoln College are notable for their lack of interest in such matters and attempts over the years have ultimately failed. Abbey Access Centre is hopefully open again on a long term basis but it came perilously close to closing and their staff are unlikely to be able to make much of a contribution to local affairs.

Similarly there is no realistic prospect of operating the office by volunteers only without much more consideration of the issues involved.

There is the suggestion of selling the building to raise funds. Before asking to what purpose those funds would be put, we believe that this may not be possible. The office was purchased as part of the Renewal Area initiative which was funded from European sources. We were told at the time that if the office were to be sold, then that money would have to be returned.

We now hear that it is possible that any money raised from the sale of the Belmont Office would remain within Neighbourhood Working. In other words Abbey Ward loses and Sincil Bank gains from our loss. Quite a slap in the face by adding insult to injury!

There is a strong suggestion in the consultation document about the use of volunteers. If the City Council think that we have plenty of such volunteers then they are even more out of touch than we thought! Organisations such as MRNI have been short of suitable volunteers throughout our twenty year existence and recently this has become critical. We do not have the ability to continue to publish "Abbey News" nor do we have the ability to publicise residents' meetings which need almost a door-to-door campaign.

In the case of MRNI, our core group of 7 members has five over the age of 70, one of whom is actually over 80. Attempts at finding suitable replacements have so far proved negative.

Please do not think that the Neighbourhood Board will continue without support from the council. It simply will not happen. The work already done has been, we believe, valuable to the council and must have saved effort by officers. At present the police use the Board as their "Police panel" for consultation purposes although we understand that this is a statutory requirement, it also will fail.

In recent years, Paul Carrick has sought and obtained sources of funding and helped organisations to make applications. Community First was such an initiative resulting in over £100,000 injection into Abbey activities. Without him and the office such an option is just not open to us. Paul has identified a considerable number of funding sources and helped the relevant organisations with their bid for such funding. For a small group to try this unaided is a daunting prospect.

Since the Renewal Area was launched almost twenty years ago, we have had firstly Frank Hanson and then Paul Carrick who have both proved invaluable and both have worked far beyond their official brief in both effort and hours. Their commitment has made an enormous difference. In recent months, Paul has been less effective because his efforts have been spread over a much larger area.

To withdraw Neighbourhood Working from Abbey Ward, and we believe other areas, will result in the City Council becoming even more remote from the residents it is supposed to serve. To save a relatively small amount of money will have the greatest detrimental effect on those most in need of support. We do understand the disastrous effect of the reduction in Government funding but we feel that every effort should be made to reverse this decision.

We certainly do not object to a review of Neighbourhood Working but it is regrettable that local groups and organisations were not involved in such a

Appendix 6 –Written responses to first round of consultation

Comment
<p>I feel neighbourhood working in the Birchwood area has been unnoticed.</p> <p>Residents often comment that there are no facilities for children, especially younger children as the only play area is over a busy road at the Birchwood Leisure Centre. The play equipment there is suitable for older children. There is no under 5's play equipment anywhere in the area. Residents have to take younger children to North Hykeham or Hartsholme Park.</p> <p>Diamond Park (Staverton Crescent) was used by families in the area for younger children but this has been closed for some time as the equipment is out of date. This was set up by a church group.</p> <p>As far as I am aware there has been no evidence of improvements to benefit residents the Birchwood area.</p>
<p>My only comment is that I hope housing revenue funding to the project is in line with areas they are working in and we have housing.</p> <p>It would be helpful if we have a remit of what work they are undertaking as this has always been vague in the past.</p>
<p>I would like to voice my thoughts on the closure on the neighbourhood teams – especially the North Neighbourhood Office.</p> <p>I understand the reasoning behind the closure of these offices, however, I believe that losing them could impact greatly on the local community and goes against everything that the new Vision 2020 policy stands for.</p> <p>The North Neighbourhood Team has supported many of my residents on the Ermine West. I have had numerous tenants who were/are desperately in need of support, whether it is with reporting basic repairs to getting assistance with food and heating, all of which have been sign posted to the Neighbourhood Team. I appreciate that there are other organisations that can do some of these things but none of them are as reliable or dedicated then these teams – and none of these represent the City of Lincoln Council.</p> <p>Removing these offices would remove the last Council office buildings from the estates. Residents know that if they need 'the Council' they can attend these offices, especially those who cannot afford buses to City Hall, phones or the internet. All residents that I have sign posted to the office have always had extremely positive feedback, in addition to this, it re-enforces the trust and the notion that the Council is actively helping in the community.</p>
<p>Fully support the proposed changes in terms of the job roles within the team(s) but opposed to moving all resources into the Sincil Bank/Monks Rd area. The south and north teams have done great work over the years. These communities are not any more enabled than the central area. Arguably</p>

review. Together they have a wide range of local knowledge and experience but they have been totally ignored. This appears to us to show a considerable degree of contempt for all their efforts over the years. Initiatives such as **Street Champions** need a base with professional support.

The proposed strategy contains phrases such as “Strengthening accountability to local people”, Prioritise activity aimed at reducing poverty and deprivation” and Providing Community leadership at neighbourhood level”. This simply replaces a system which works and has provided benefits with pure management-speak. Meaningless and vague at best. We have no confidence in such a so-called strategy.

The following is an additional response from MRNI after discussion at the Abbey Board Meeting on 18th January.

During discussion it emerged that there is a danger of confusing issues of the proposed **Sincil Bank Regeneration** package and **Neighbourhood Working**. While we accept that there are commonalities, the two do not need to be coterminous.

If the Neighbourhood Working area were extended to include that part of Abbey Ward centred on Monks Road between Greetwell Road and the River Witham, there could be considerable benefits in a new Board covering this area and the Sincil Bank regeneration area, not least of which is the efficiency of running a board covering both of these areas.

Additionally, as Sincil Bank does not have a local office, the existing Belmont Office could service both areas. Although it is not centred near Sincil Bank this would be a low cost option and the distance is not necessarily a disadvantage.

There could also be considerable advantages from a joint approach to the needs of these two areas such as Policing, ASB, Health and Employment.

It is evident that Abbey ward residents have a considerable sense of belonging and an appreciation of the benefits of Neighbourhood Working. To retain part of Abbey would actually produce a considerable feel-good factor which would benefit Sincil Bank.

The way in which the review of Neighbourhood Working and the subsequent “consultation” have, we believe, severely damaged the credibility of the City Council. Future efforts must be directed to mitigating this view and MRNI is keen to help.

How short-sighted is this ? Has anyone actually sat down and thought about the long-term repercussions? Please read my comments. At the moment I do not need the majority many services available through the Neighbourhood Team, but I may well do in the future. So few of the residents on St. Giles, and I assume the other areas, have even been told about these cut-backs, how is it possible to even think about a ‘public consultation’? It is the most vulnerable of our residents (those who the Government have promised to help), who will be most affected by this type of cut-back, and who will suffer.

THINK AGAIN!

Thanks for consulting on Neighbourhood Teams. I have been involved in and accessed various volunteer and community organisations on St Giles - including the Surestart Centre, St Giles Parish Church, the Community Garden, a volunteer-led parent & toddler group, Cupcake Cafe - and they would all be harmed by the removal of our Neighbourhood team. Please avoid cutting this vital service.

The Police fully understand the financial position the Council are in and why the changes to Neighbourhood Management are being proposed, what is important for us is to see a plan around how the loss is going to be mitigated, detail about how the services who will pick up the responsibility intend to change the way they work.

There has been a great deal of work done over the last 10 years or so on estates such as St Giles, Moorland and Abbey by Neighbourhood Management, which has improved these areas markedly and it is really important this is not lost. I remember when I first took over responsibility for the St Giles 8 yrs ago the Police would not at times go on the estate unless they got together as a group at Safeways and then enter the estate as a group. We had significant community cohesion issues, unrest on the estate and a complete loss of confidence in public services ability to deal with the issues, this is not the case now and I do not want to see a return to this. With the loss of the Youth Club building and now the loss of another community building it needs to be thought through how the public message is going to be managed and reassurance given to them in the areas that are losing Neighbourhood Management.

I attach a completed consultation questionnaire, but also have a few general comments:

1. We both agree that generally it is appropriate to undertake a review of neighbourhood working, even without the requirement for cost savings. Communities need to be in control and there comes a point, where intervention could impede rather than stimulate development of the community because the community begins to become reliant on the support being provided.
2. We also both agree that whilst, with the reduction in the size of the team, it would be unwise to stretch limited resources too thinly. However, there is a danger that in focusing considerable resources on one area of the city some of issues within that community could squeeze out into other areas. E.g. improved housing, resulting in higher rents could mean housing in other areas (e.g. Carholme) become more attractive. It is therefore important to maintain a watching brief on other areas, in order that any issues can be flagged up and dealt with.
3. Whilst it is no doubt already recognised, we feel we should reiterate that the withdrawal of neighbourhood working from all but one area of the city coincides with the end of the Community Cohesion Officer Post. This is of particular concern in Abbey Ward where currently both Neighbourhood Working and the Community Cohesion Officer work, and where there are ongoing concerns around

cohesion following the outcome of the referendum in the summer. If the current bid to the Controlling Migration Fund is successful this will alleviate this problem.

1. Whilst we do recognise the Councils need to save money the cutting of 3 teams down to 1 will leave the service irreparable damage to the service.

Having seen what great strides have been made by the teams in the community and the dedication shown by our members in those teams we would urge a re-think of these proposals.

In particular the St Giles matters office is used by outside organisations ie CAB, Police along with our own staff such as Housing Officers and Welfare Advice. Some of our most vulnerable people in our society will be “lost” without this service which they have come to rely on for help.

The same can be said of the other offices in the City. We believe that if these proposals were adopted it would put a greater strain on other areas within the Council.

In the proposal documentation there is attached the 2015 Annual report detailing the good work the teams have done. This would be lost, if as the proposal suggests the Council commit to 1 regeneration area.

We would ask how do these proposals sit with the Councils 2020 Vision?

2. We note in the Timeline document that withdrawal from services (from May 2017 onwards). We are asking what thought has been made for a transitional period? How long ?
3. On the staffing side of the proposals we note there would be a dedicated apprentice post. UNISON is firmly committed to the apprentice scheme we have. However we do have concerns as to how training is going to be given. We would imagine that the workload on the remaining staff would be immense so has any thought been given to training needs?
4. UNISON believe that the removal of these services does not fit into the Councils aims and visions.

In summary UNISON do not support the proposals.

Firstly I would like to express my concerns regarding the consultation period. I feel the timing telling staff could have been managed a lot better

and a lot sooner. I know there has been talks since July 2016 regarding reviewing the service why couldn't staff have been involved in the process and had an input helping coming up with other options that could have been taken forward for consultation. The teams could have spoken to boards, residents and partners back then expressing that cuts had to be made and how by working together we could have come up with solutions moving forward.

The time scale given in the paper work is very short and feels like the process will be rushed. I believe all residents living in the areas we work should be consulted on the proposal. The current consultation period is not long enough for this to happen. Therefore won't be a true reflection on how the neighbourhoods feel.

I understand cuts have to be made and over the years neighbourhood working has been spread to thinly. Concentrating on less areas would allow us to have more of an impact. The proposal going from three teams to one with the new team focusing in Sincil Bank area does not reflect the current issues in other neighbourhoods I feel these areas will miss out on much valued and needed support they are currently given by neighbourhood working. My concern going forward is who will bridge the gap between council services and the residents. Having the neighbourhood offices open for the public to access gives residents a safe place to come to speak to an official person for help, support or guidance. Housing officers, benefits advice sign post residents to us for help as they often don't have the time. I feel once these close residents will have nowhere to go unless they make the trip to city hall not everyone has access to a phone or computer. Residents who I deal with on a day to day basis have literacy issues not being able to read or write. I have attached to this letter cases studies of residents who I have had support. This will give you an idea of what support residents are given who access the service and how vital the work is we do supporting those who are most vulnerable.

Going forward I would like to see neighbourhood offices remain open as these are vital for residents to have that safe place to go to where they know they will get the support they need. How I see them remaining open is through other council services operating from them and becoming more involved in the community. For example housing officers and customer service assistants could be there on hand to support residents even if this is once a week. Without the service I don't see how the various surgeries will carry on as neighbourhood working facilitate these to happen. Which will be a great loss to residents who need to access them.

The council's vision for 2020 states "Imagine a future where people feel safe and welcome in their communities" How do they propose to do this? Neighbourhood working have been doing this in neighbourhoods for years bringing people together. Our current neighbourhood plan in Moorland for 2015 – 18 has safe and friendly community chosen by residents as a priority. Residents see this as an issue and want to see more happening in the area. How will this be delivered without a neighbourhood team? Neighbourhood teams have a great working relationship with neighbourhood policing teams working together to make areas safer. Who will carry on this great partnership? No other teams in the council have that hands on partnership with them.

The current proposed option I agree there needs to be a role such as the community connector this is something that is currently missing in the

current structure and would be very beneficial. I do not agree with having a full time apprentice for the time being. There is a lot of support that needs to be given to an apprentice especially in the first few months. Which would not be appropriate with a new team being formed and moving out of areas. An apprentice would be more beneficial to have further down the line once things have settled with the new team. It is also proposed to move to the Director of Housing and Regeneration but the proposal states to emphasise a focus on lifting people out of poverty wouldn't it make more sense to be in Chief Executive Directorate and sit alongside the team working on the council's Anti-Poverty Strategy? It needs to be made clearer if the team will be working on Regeneration work or Anti-Poverty.

Having worked in neighbourhood working for several years I do feel passionate that the service does have an impact in all the neighbourhoods. I strongly feel some support still needs to be offered to residents especially to the most vulnerable. I hope the service can carry on for years to come and the great and positive work that has been done so far will not be forgotten.

Example 1

Supported a local male resident for several months after coming into centre for advice about his gas and electric meter. Had no gas or electric in the property for nearly a year.

Features of complexity:

- Resident open to ASBRAC referral & safeguarding referral
- Learning difficulties
- Criminal record – previous prison sentences
- On psychotic medication for schizophrenia
- Poor Memory attention
- Had CPN – Issues around engagement
- Considered high risk to gas/electronic contractors
- Resident had problems keeping appointments

Nature of support:

- Client did not have phone – The neighbourhood office therefore acted as a phone contact point
- Reminding resident of appointments - posting notes through letterbox
- Due to their inability to communicate with him, liaison with gas and electric company on a weekly basis and communicating messages to resident
- Accompanied resident to appointment with CAB – to enable me to prompt him on future tasks needing completion
- Attended property when new gas meter was fitted

Example 2

Support a resident who had been badly attacked in her own home after she came out of hospital arranging for works to be carried out on the house to make it safe and secure after police had been in and took door handles etc for forensic evidence. Had issues with gas and electric company after changing suppliers.

Features of complexity:

- Alcoholic
- Issues with memory loss- after being badly assaulted in her own home
- Taking strong medication for pain relief after attack
- High levels anxiety
- Vulnerable exposing herself to risk from others (especially men)

Nature of support:

- Requested repairs to be done to property after police had been in after attack
- Rang gas and electric company on her behalf due to memory loss couldn't remember what supplier she was with
- Liaised with CID, local policing team and housing officer around safety concerns of resident.

Client did not have phone – phone contact

With regards to the consultation itself I, and many other people, have found the questions very hard to understand and reply to and this is why I am writing you a letter rather than filling in the questionnaire. Many people from within our area have also stressed and been very passionate about the way in which the consultation and the questions are laid out, and believe that this could be written in a different way and in standard English so people could understand this a lot easier.

Regarding the proposal itself, I believe it is the wrong one. Neighbourhood Working has been a huge part of the communities that it works in for ten years and has really turned things around in these areas. Being from the area I have always, since I was younger seen St Giles as a no go area as I was constantly hearing about multiple crime stories from the estate and believe Neighbourhood Working has had a huge part to play in turning the community around, and I feel that taking what is effectively a hub for the community away, something they rely on, crime will increase and we will take huge steps backwards.

Within the new proposal it is proposed to have one community manager, the creation of a community connector role and a community support assistant role as well as a permanent apprentice role. The first thing I will say is a highly object to the role of a permanent apprentice. Effectively this person will be taking over the job role of one of the administration assistants who will potentially be made redundant, which I am totally against. Also who is going to have the time to train this apprentice? Who is going to fund this apprentice? Who is going to watch over this apprentice because he or she can't be on their own? You are proposing a team of three others who are already going to be doing their own job role and won't have time to also support an apprentice. I personally believe there should be two admin roles for the large workload there will be.

The area in which you are proposing to be in, I believe is totally the wrong area. Sincil Bank area is mostly private rented properties, surely something like this should be in a majority council housing area. I understand that the Sincil Bank area probably does need something doing with it but you are effectively cutting all contact you currently have in the North and the South of the city to be centrally based, when the City of the Lincoln Council is already based in the central area of the city.

Many residents on the estate have only heard about the consultation through word of mouth from other people on the estate and believe that their views aren't being considered and feel let down by the council that they aren't considering the people that really matter and the people it will affect the most.

In the recent 2020 vision it states 'supporting our vulnerable tenants', but effectively this is something that you are taking away by the removal of Neighbourhood Working. And with the residents being at the heart of everything the council do, I don't believe that the removal of this service will benefit them in any way. The 2020 vision is something that Neighbourhood Working is already doing, so why get rid of it?

We offer a number of services at the St Giles Matters building including a weekly benefits advice surgery which is attended by a number of residents in the area and is something that is heavily relied upon. The benefits advisor who attends these weekly surgeries has built up a strong working relationship with residents in the area and people rely upon these services when they cannot get to City Hall. A large amount of people in the area can't afford to pay the bus fair to get to City Hall because of how extensive it is, so this service is something they rely upon.

Apart from this we hold regular educational courses from the building that residents within the area attend and learn new skills, as well as offering out the building to residents within the area who need it. For example a local knitting club use one of the rooms on a weekly basis because they cannot afford the charges of the community centre, and we are also used by a number of different residents to hold things like coffee mornings and meetings, where will they be relocated to once the building has gone? Because they cannot afford the fees for places such as the community centre.

Along with this residents rely on our phone and repair phone service along with the computer service we provide. I think Neighbourhood Working is about so much more than just being there to help with things like that though, this a community's hub and a lot of peoples only contact between them and the council and they have built up a relationship and trust the people that work here.

You have stated that one of your key focuses will be on helping people enquire skills and ultimately employment, but so many other organisations already do this so why should that be one of our focuses?

Within the consultation you talk about neighbourhood boards and supporting themselves with volunteers. Who are these volunteers doing to be? We and groups within the community already struggle to take on volunteers and with the loss of Neighbourhood Working who is going to take on the role of sustaining these boards, which includes sorting agendas and minutes, organising meeting rooms, taking minutes and more, who is going to volunteer to do this role without being paid.

I personally believe that the removal of the Neighbourhood Working programme will have a huge effect on the communities it works within and will send these communities backwards and not forwards.

In the first instance I would advise that I don't disagree with the proposed option in the consultation and understand the rationale behind choosing Sincil Bank for action as the area itself looks a disgrace and requires significant intervention.

The current neighbourhood working programme has in my view been spread far too thin over the years although that said I am both amazed and extremely proud we have achieved so much despite all the constraints.

I disagree with the idea of having an apprentice in the new team as I consider this will place an unreasonable burden on the appointed Manager who will be busy enough without having to concentrate on Training, Supervising and Appraising this individual and it would be equally unfair to place the responsibility on the junior members of the new team. I would instead keep two Admin posts at least for a period whilst the new team bed in.

The other issue was the timing of the consultation itself, having been only made aware of the details on the 20th December 2016 and knowing there was a substantial Christmas and New Year break, this in my view was poor judgement and has only been reinforced by the cynicism expressed by staff and partners when they received their documentation.

The aim of the Neighbourhood North Team has always been to improve the quality of life for residents and I have always considered in order to create successful sustainable communities it is essential that the people who live in them must have a say in how they are shaped. There is a clear link between resident satisfaction and involvement in local services.

Whilst Neighbourhood Working has gone a considerable way to involve communities the challenge of empowering them to be self-sustaining sadly remains and Council Services are partly to blame as their interaction with their service users has been both minimal and tokenistic.

The proposal to move the new team into housing is a good one but their remit will be regeneration so something needs to set up to continue to act as a conduit between residents and the council services and whether that be via the voluntary sector, the existing resident involvement team, housing managers/officers or a combination is open but what is clear in my view is that someone/something needs to replace the neighbourhood manager role.

The withdrawal of neighbourhood working from all areas to regenerate Sincil Bank, whilst understandable given the savings target and the Sincil Bank Area being in such a state, I feel the current proposal will nevertheless present significant issues for our local communities and even potentially damage the reputation of the City of Lincoln Council itself in the process, the timing of the review just before Christmas has already brought criticism and the consultation form and lengthy documents that accompanied it has not put the council in a favourable light and some residents have gone as far as to say that "this is a done deal so why bother".

It is therefore essential in my view that palatable solutions are found to replace and/or mitigate the loss of Neighbourhood Working in the North. Whilst the preferred option is indeed harsh, now that it is out there, the Council should not now opt for a watered down version of the NW programme and instead we should concentrate on making the preferred option workable.

The St Giles Matters building has been a very useful hub but the community centre has been a loss maker and its room for hire philosophy has remained unchanged. The loss of the St Giles Youth Centre has provided an opportunity and perhaps financial assistance to create a new hub that encompasses the services residents require but equally our aspirations could be much wider to not only have community groups, a tailored facility for young people, resident

access to services, a training facility but link with Partners for example in the NHS to provide a neighbourhood medical facility that fits with their Sustainability and Transformation agenda and keeping things local. St Giles Matters building could be sold off to realise some Capitol receipts to finance a new fit for purpose hub and be truly a community centre and the County Council, NHS, City Council and the Voluntary sector would make a powerful consortium not to mention the benefit of sharing costs.

In terms of a work programme for the exit of NW, my suggestions would be the following if the preferred option is chosen.

1. First we would now need to identify all tasks that are currently performed by the North Neighbourhood Team and then do three things:

a. Consider what the community can now do itself drawing on the ideas of the community and the respective Neighbourhood boards

b. Identify what still needs support and identify where this can come from.

c. What can be stopped altogether without damaging the overall programme?

2. On the back of this work I feel we need to develop exit strategies tailored to each neighbourhood as no one size fits all and then bearing in mind the identified tasks the exit plans should be adapted and adopted as soon as possible.

3. No new work is undertaken in the areas other than a concentration on sustaining what exists and adding value where this might be possible.

4. Discussions should be held in each area with relevant internal and external partners to take up, wherever they agree, any remaining gaps in provision.

5. The boards should be encouraged and supported to become separate charitable bodies so they can access funding in their own right and potentially employ its own workforce even if under an umbrella third sector organisation to begin with as reliance on volunteers is fraught with difficulty.

6. A task and finish group should be set up to ensure that the work is completed and it should be made clear that the work is time limited.

My overall view is we cannot change the fact that savings are needed, that Sincil Bank area is a disgrace, that we are not a statutory service and the north areas have benefitted from a local office, a dedicated team and in my view particularly excellent access to services for quite a number of years.

Change is inevitable but good succession and business continuity plans can ensure it can be less frightening for the community and some well thought out, viable exit strategies can provide the reassurance the neighbourhoods require to ensure that NW does not stop and just as importantly progress continues in these communities.

Strange that suddenly officers are willing to throw away over 10 years of hard work to keep NW as a thriving part of the the City of Lincoln

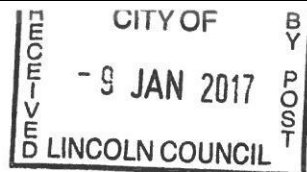
Are we so keen to go back to what things where then ...no go areas estates not very nice places to live

I just think there has been very little time or effort put into compiling any off it..written in officer speak jargon

I suspect that no matter how long I spend on this reply it will be a waste of my time its high time the city council was open and honest and tells the city residents exactly high good or bad things really areWhats the real financial situation ?...

Just do be aware the good or bad from this savage set of cuts could easily be a long lasting legacy remembered for all the wrong reasons





LIN

LA

Dear Mr Coburn,

I have been told
you have decided to close the St
Office.

Do you realise how it
affect people on the estate, to
elderly like myself and the pe
with children. we need someone
go locally for help and advice
There will be no Benefit advice. So
no C.A.B. no job club. And also
have police in that office now.
they will also go, and we need the
The people working in the office I
been helpfull to me, its just far
inough away for me to walk there
I know they will be able to help,
I am aged 82 and have bad legs
I am portely sighted.



The consultation responses also included a petition to 'Keep St Giles Open' containing 37 responses.

St

may be forced

Please sign this petition!!

to try and save We've
lost loads recently i.e.
youth club etc. please lets
try as a community and
keep something most of
us rely on!! Thanks

C Booth
10 PECKHAM

C CLAREY BN HONS

J Dent

~~Adithan~~

E Halli

~~Al~~

~~Al~~

S. Ogden

De's

M. Lemmy

Booth

126 Macaulay Drive
Don't
ESQ

P. I. Marey BN HONS

115 Macaulay Drive

127 Macaulay drive

117 Macaulay drive

129 Macaulay drive

4 vernon street

129 Macaulay Drive

9 Shendan close.

128 Macaulay drive

128 Macaulay Drive

Petition to save St Giles
matters building Please
Sign

name

Owen

Kurtis

Kim

Donna

Donna

Sara Masden

U. Ueff

Clare Morgan

S. WSKR

C. Wren-Steward

Toni Withers

Rebecca Holmes

Jenny Flannery

Amanda Thorne

? edge

ADDRESSES

Dryden Ave

hants Gardens

Loughton way

Ermine east.

Colendge gardens

Addison Drive

Longdales Rd.

Swiss gardens.

Cottingham Drive

clarendon view

Cottingham drive

Marlowe drive

Marlowe Drive

St Giles matters building might
be closing please Sign
if want to keep open!!

We've lost most of our
facilities what more do
we have !!

Sign !!

Karen Howard
Susan HOLDING
Selina Smith
Norma Godfrey

Helen Penival
Tony Hanco

L. Thomas
~~Doan~~

F. Williams
L. Bell

Address !!

122 Macaulay drive
Lincoln LN2 4ER

118 Macaulay Drive
Lincoln LN2 4ER

333 Monks Road
Lincoln LN2 5LE

116 Macaulay Drive
LN2 4ER

116 Macaulay Drive
LN2 4ER

13 Robert Tressell
135 Goldsmith Walk

181 Goldsmith Walk

191 Goldsmith

Flat B 42 Lamb

