

Leicester  
City Council

SECOND DESPATCH

## Overview Select Committee

**2 February 2017**

Further to the agenda for the above meeting which has already been circulated, please find attached the following item of Urgent Business and also additional information relating to agenda item 10.

### **1) Any Other Urgent Business: Transforming Neighbourhood Services – North East Area - Call in of decision**

Under Part 4D, Rule 12f of the Council's constitution, call-ins are to be referred to a meeting of the full Council, but shall prior to this be referred to a relevant Scrutiny Committee.

The Chair has agreed to accept this as an urgent item, because of the need for it to be referred to Scrutiny prior to Council which will meet on 22 February 2017.

The Report of the Monitoring Officer, the Executive Decision Report with appendices and Decision Notice are attached.

### **2) Item 10. General Fund Revenue Budget 2017/18 to 2019/20 – Additional Information**

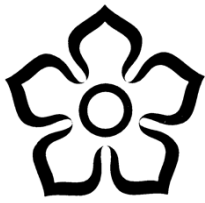
Further to the General Fund Revenue Budget Report for 2017/18 to 2019/20, draft minute extracts are attached relating to the consideration of the report at the following Scrutiny Commissions:

Adult Social Care Scrutiny Commission  
Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Commission  
Heritage, Leisure and Sport Scrutiny Commission  
Neighbourhood Services and Community Involvement Scrutiny Commission

Thank you.

Julie Harget  
Democratic Support Officer  
Tel: 0116 454 6357  
Email: Julie.harget@leicester.gov.uk





Leicester  
City Council

B3

DRAFT MINUTE EXTRACT

Minutes of the Meeting of the  
ADULT SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Held: TUESDAY, 24 JANUARY 2017 at 5:30 pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Cleaver (Chair)

Councillor Dempster  
Councillor Khote

Councillor Riyait  
Councillor Thalukdar

\* \* \* \* \*

**54. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Chaplin (Vice Chair), Councillor Hunter, David Henson (Healthwatch Representative) and Councillor Palmer, Assistant City Mayor for Adult Social Care, Health Integration and Wellbeing.

**56. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

**60. ADULT SOCIAL CARE ELEMENTS OF THE GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2017-18**

Members were asked to consider the Adult Social Care elements of the General Fund Revenue Budget 2017 -18. Comments made by the Commission would be considered by the Overview Select Committee at their meeting on 2 February 2017, prior to the budget being approved by Council on 22 February 2017.

The Strategic Director, Adult Social Care presented the Adult Social Care element of the budget and stated that the future of Adult Social Care funding was challenging both locally as it was nationally. There was a continued growth in demand for the service as a result of an ageing population and increasing frailty; these factors along with the impact of people with multiple health conditions placed significant cost pressures on the service.

The Chair stated that she was pleased that the budget would be increased to deal with the pressures facing Adult Social Care but the situation was still volatile. She questioned whether the Strategic Director was comfortable that the budget would be sufficient to meet demand. The Chair and Members sought assurance that there would be an opportunity for meaningful scrutiny if any changes to the service or to the budget were being proposed.

The Strategic Director responded that Adult Social Care was a demand led service and needs had to be responded to. The budget had been based on what was known at the time, but a relatively modest increase in demand could incur additional significant costs. It was hoped however that the service would remain within budget.

A Member referred to the actions that the department was taking to live within its resources (para 7.7d) and concerns were expressed about any potential risks that may arise from reducing staffing levels to make savings. The Strategic Director responded that the Council's staffing levels were above regional comparatives with other authorities, but to enable a reduction in staffing, the work load needed to be reduced and risk managed effectively. There were ongoing projects to look at ways of reducing workload pressures; these included for example a system to manage care reviews more efficiently.

A Member referred to the issue of staff stability and stated that when staff knew that a review was forthcoming, they often resigned in order to work elsewhere. Concerns were raised around the difficulties in recruiting social workers. A suggestion was made that it would be useful for the Commission to receive a report with data on staffing levels, such as starters and leavers.

A Member commented that one of the problems faced by Leicester City Council, as opposed to Leicestershire and Rutland authorities, was that the City generally had had a low wage economy which meant that pensioners were often unable to save money towards their care support. The Strategic Director acknowledged that the demographics in Leicester presented budget pressures as there was a lower proportion of those self-funding their care and support and subsequently seeking statutory funding support from the Council.

Members commented that more money was needed from the government to fund the costs of providing adult social care. It was noted that the Government allowed Councils to increase council tax to raise funds for Adult Social Care and concerns were expressed that this was a tax on the poor and placed the blame for the situation local authorities. Views were expressed that the Council and Members needed to be more proactive in explaining to the public that because of the Government's spending cuts, there was a crisis in funding adult social care.

The Strategic Director stated that Adult Social Care locally and across the sector in England had been efficient in making savings but now fundamental efficiencies were having to be made because of the budget cuts. The service was now under extreme pressure and in Leicester for example, the

demographic pressures had not been addressed through the funding arrangements made available by the Government.

At the suggestion of a Member, it was agreed that the minutes of the discussion on this item should be sent to the Labour Members of Parliament for Leicester, with a request for them to raise the concerns expressed in the House of Commons.

A number of questions were submitted on behalf of the Vice Chair who had submitted her apologies:

The Vice Chair questioned whether any provision had been made for any overspend (if there was one) in 2016/17 or 2017/18. The Strategic Director responded that an overspend for 2016/17 was not predicted; if there was an overspend in 2017/18, this would either be met by underspends in other service areas or by reserves.

The Vice Chair also submitted some questions for the Executive. These related to reducing corporate reserves and/or asking people if they would be willing to pay more in council tax in order to increase funds available for Adult Social Care.

In a further question, the Vice Chair stated that the Executive had promised to carry out some work on the mental health impact of the budget and she questioned when this would be available. The Vice Chair also asked for details of the proposed savings from the review of Community and Voluntary Organisations and the groups that might be affected. It was agreed that these questions would be forwarded to the Deputy City Mayor as Lead Member for Adult Social Care, Health Integration and Wellbeing as he was unable to be present at the meeting.

Concerns were expressed as to the risks to the service if savings could not be made on time; and the need for early engagement with Scrutiny was reiterated.

A Member also expressed concerns about drawing on reserves to deliver the service; she expressed a view that it was preferable to manage the budget in such a way that reserves were kept for emergencies. The Strategic Director responded that efficiencies would be delivered and that it was not expected to have to draw on the reserves during the current year and where possible, if savings could be delivered earlier than originally planned and in an effectively managed way, then this would likely ease the use of reserves.

AGREED:

- 1) that the Adult Social Care element of the General Fund Revenue Budget 2017-18 be noted; and
- 2) that a minute extract of the Commission's discussion on the budget be forwarded to the Labour Members of Parliament for Leicester, with a request for them to raise the concerns in the House of Commons.





Leicester  
City Council

B4

Draft Minute Extract

Minutes of the Meeting of the  
HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Held: WEDNESDAY, 4 JANUARY 2017 at 5:30 pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Dempster (Chair)  
Councillor Fonseca (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Cassidy  
Councillor Chaplin  
Councillor Unsworth  
Councillor Cleaver  
Councillor Sangster

In Attendance:

Councillor Palmer – Deputy City Mayor

Also Present:

David Henson      Healthwatch Leicester  
Prof Azhar Farooqi      Co-Chair, Leicester City Clinical Commissioning Group  
Richard Morris      Director of Corporate Affairs, Leicester City Clinical  
                                 Commissioning Group  
Dr Peter Miller      Chief Executive, Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust

\* \* \* \* \*

**51. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were asked to declare any interests they might have in the business on the agenda. No such declarations were made.

**56. PUBLIC HEALTH BUDGET**

The Commission received the draft General Revenue Budget 2017-18. The Commission was asked to consider the Public Health elements of the budget. Comments made by the Commission would be considered by the Overview Select Committee on 2nd February 2017 prior to budget being approved by the Council on 22nd February 2017.

The Deputy City Mayor introduced the report and commented that all areas of

the spending within and use of Public Health Budgets were being reviewed. The Public Health Budgets were currently ring-fenced and grants had been reduced in recent years. These reductions were expected to continue in future years before the ring-fence of the budget was eventually removed altogether and the public health budget became part of the Council's overall budget framework. The Government had required savings of £2 million since May 2015 and there were a number of spending reviews underway to identify further savings in the budget which would report to the Commission in due course. The current budget details for public health were, therefore, lacking detail and this detail would appear through the spending review process. The direction of travel for the future was however clear that public health services would be delivered very differently to the current situation. The provision of public health services was far wider than those currently provided by the ring fenced public health budget. There were health implications and benefits from a wide variety of services provided by all departments and services.

The Chair welcomed the opportunity for the Commission to comment upon the spending reviews as they progressed as this would give the Commission an opportunity to help shape future service provision based upon service outputs and value for money.

Members of the Commission made the following observations and comments:-

- a) The current report format did not provide sufficient detail on the breakdown the public health expenditure and the impact of other services on public health. It was, therefore, difficult for the Commission to make any detailed comment on this aspect of the budget.
- b) There were only 3 references to public health expenditure in the draft report and there was no reference to the impact that the Sustainability Transformation Plan (STP) would have in future service provision.
- c) It would be helpful to have an analysis of health outcomes compared to budget spend and how these compared to other comparator local authorities.
- d) All Council budgets impacted upon health and wellbeing and mental health wellbeing and there was insufficient information in the report to specific health issues to be able to make any meaningful comment. The report also lacked any meaningful comments in relation to equality impact assessments on protected groups (protected characteristics).
- e) It would be helpful for Scrutiny Commissions to receive a short 2 page report identifying specific budget issues and implications for service delivery rather than the current general report.

In summary, the Deputy City Mayor commented on Members' observations and answered their questions as follows:-



- a) Precise details of financial implications and the impact of the STP on council services were still emerging as the STP continued to develop. This, added to the uncertainty facing future local authority budgets, added to the complexity and uncertainty for planning future service delivery.
- b) The Public Health Team were looking at models used elsewhere in the country to assess impacts upon mental health and wellbeing, but if this was to have real value it needed to encompass services both inside and outside of the council's control.
- c) The current budget process, adopted in recent years, focused on budget ceilings for each department rather than specific budget levels for each individual service within a department's area of responsibility. This reflected the budgetary pressures currently faced by local authorities and provided a greater opportunity for the scrutiny function to help shape priorities and services. The Substance Abuse Review process had been a good example of this.
- d) The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) statement in the report was appropriate for the general nature of the draft budget report. However, when the individual service reviews were considered by the Commission, the EIA statement would be far more detailed and specific to the impact of any proposed changes on the service users.
- e) The reference to a budget reduction of £0.7 million in 2017/18 (paragraph 7.26) and the saving of an estimated £1.3 million consolidating a range of children's public health services into a single contract (paragraph 7.27) did not mean that too many savings had been achieved. The budget strategy extends to 19/20, and the saving anticipates future cuts in funding for public health which are expected in 2018/19 and 2019/20. Some monies were also being reinvested in other areas which make a significant contribution to public health.

AGREED:

That the draft budget report be received and the Commission's comments be reported to the Overview Select Committee.





Leicester  
City Council

B5

DRAFT MINUTE EXTRACT

Minutes of the Meeting of the  
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT SCRUTINY  
COMMISSION

Held: WEDNESDAY, 25 JANUARY 2017 at 5:30 pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Cutkelvin (Chair)

Councillor Aldred  
Councillor Dr Chowdhury

Councillor Fonseca  
Councillor Hunter

In Attendance:

Councillor Master, Assistant City Mayor - Neighbourhood Services  
Councillor Waddington, Assistant City Mayor - Jobs & Skills

\* \* \* \* \*

**62. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Gugnani and Councillor Halford.

**63. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Dr Chowdhury declared Other Disclosable Interests in the following agenda items:

- Agenda item 8, "Community Asset Transfer Update", in that he worked in a voluntary organisation that could be involved in asset transfer in the future;
- Agenda item 10, "Citywide Voluntary and Community Sector Support", in that he had received support under the contract discussed in the report and the organisation he worked for was a delivery partner for a project funded through the European Social Fund and the Lottery Fund; and
- Agenda item 11, "Response to the Leicester Advice Sector: A Report Outlining the Risk and Demands in the City", in that his employer received

some funding from the Council and HMRC to provide advice to city residents.

Councillor Fonseca declared Other Disclosable Interests in the following agenda items:

- Agenda item 10, “Citywide Voluntary and Community Sector Support”, in that he was a member of a voluntary organisation affiliated to Voluntary Action LeicesterShire (VAL) that had received assistance from VAL some years previously to frame a constitution; and
- Agenda item 11, “Response to the Leicester Advice Sector: A Report Outlining the Risk and Demands in the City”, in that he had done some voluntary work with the Citizens Advice Bureau, (now Citizens Advice Leicestershire), approximately three years ago.

In accordance with the Council’s Code of Conduct, these interests were not considered so significant that they were likely to prejudice the Councillors’ judgement of the public interest. They were not therefore required to withdraw from the meeting during consideration of the relevant items.

### **73. GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2017/18 TO 2019/20**

The Director of Finance submitted a report setting out the City Mayor’s proposed budget for 2017/18 to 2019/20.

The Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services introduced the report, explaining that the report did not contain a lot of detail, as this was scrutinised through the various spending reviews being undertaken in service areas. The Commission noted this, but expressed some disappointment that it was not included in the report, as this would have facilitated consideration of issues such as alternative ways of releasing funds.

The Commission welcomed the increase in managed reserves, but felt that it would have been useful to know which service areas had made the savings discussed in the report.

It was noted that the report made reference to anticipated financial difficulties in coming years, but did not contain information on the approach that would be taken to these challenges, (for example, what would be prioritised). This was felt to be an omission, as it made it difficult to comment on the proposed budget.

**AGREED:**

- 1) That the report be noted; and
- 2) That the Overview Select Committee be asked to take account of the comments made by this Commission in its consideration of the General Fund revenue budget for 2017/18 to 2019/20, particularly noting the Commission’s disappointment at the lack of detail contained in the report.







Leicester  
City Council

**WARDS AFFECTED**  
**All Wards**

**OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE**  
**COUNCIL**

**2 FEBRUARY 2017**  
**22 FEBRUARY 2017**

---

**CALL-IN OF EXECUTIVE DECISION – TRANSFORMING NEIGHBOURHOOD  
SERVICES – NORTH EAST AREA**

---

**REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

An Executive decision taken by the Assistant Mayor, Neighbourhood Services on 23 January 2017 relating to Transforming Neighbourhood Services – North-East Area has been the subject of a five member call-in under the procedures at Rule 12 of Part 4D, City Mayor and Executive Procedure Rules, of the Council's Constitution.

The procedure rules state that a scrutiny committee or any five councillors may request formally that the decision be called-in for a further review by giving notice in writing to the Monitoring Officer within five working days of the decision.

The five Councillors who signed the call in were: Councillor Willmott (sponsor), Councillor Kitterick (seconder), Councillor Chaplin, Councillor Riyait and Councillor Shelton.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Overview Select Committee is recommended to either:

- a) Note the report. (*This has the effect of rolling the call-in forward to full Council without comment.*)
- b) Comment on the specific issues raised by the call-in, for forwarding to the next meeting of full Council; or
- c) Resolve that the call-in be withdrawn;

### **3. REPORT**

#### Process

The call-in submitted to the Monitoring Officer was in the following terms:

*“We the undersigned wish to call in the decision taken on 23 January 2017 by Cllr Master concerning Rushey Mead Library and Recreation Centre under the TNS Programme. We believe that the proposals are unworkable and do not deliver sufficient savings to justify closure of the library.”*

The Monitoring Officer has confirmed that the call-in satisfies the requirements of the procedure rules and it has therefore proceeded as per the process set out at Rule 12 of Part 4D, City Mayor and Executive Procedure Rules of the Council’s Constitution.

Where a call-in has been made, officers are to take no further legally binding action and the matter shall be referred to a meeting of the full Council. Prior to this it shall be referred to a relevant Scrutiny Committee if one is programmed or a special scrutiny committee if one is convened.

The call-in may however be withdrawn if:

- The relevant scrutiny committee makes a resolution to withdraw; or
- The sponsor and seconder of the call-in inform the Monitoring Officer that they wish the call-in to be withdrawn.

Following consideration of a call-in by full Council, the original decision will be deemed to be revived in its entirety. Any agreement by the decision maker to change the original decision will require a further formal Executive Decision.

#### Background

The relevant report and decision notice are attached at Appendix 1

### **4. FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

#### **4.1. Financial Implications**

The financial implications are set out in the accompanying Executive Decision Report – Colin Sharpe, Head of Finance, ext. 374081.

#### **4.2 Legal Implications**

The legal implications are set out in the accompanying Executive Decision Report – Kamal Adatia, City Barrister and Head of Standards, ext. 371401.



**5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/NO	Paragraph References Within the Report
Equal Opportunities	<b>N</b>	
Policy	<b>N</b>	
Sustainable and Environmental	<b>N</b>	
Crime and Disorder	<b>N</b>	
Human Rights Act	<b>N</b>	
Elderly/People on Low Income	<b>N</b>	
Corporate Parenting	<b>N</b>	
Health Inequalities Impact	<b>N</b>	

**6. BACKGROUND PAPERS – LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

None

**7. CONSULTATIONS**

None.

**8. REPORT AUTHOR**

Francis Connolly,  
Senior Democratic Services Officer



# AOUB a

## RECORD OF DECISION BY CITY MAYOR OR INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER

1.	<b>DECISION TITLE</b>	Transforming Neighbourhood Services North East Area
2.	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>	None
3.	<b>DATE OF DECISION</b>	23 January 2017
4.	<b>DECISION MAKER</b>	Assistant City Mayor Neighbourhood Services
5.	<b>DECISION TAKEN</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) To agree the model as presented in the report into implementation upon completion of outstanding action points including consultation with affected staff.</li> <li>2) To reflect the anticipated £74.3k p.a. revenue savings in the approved budget and budget strategy, and reduce the budgets accordingly from January 2018.</li> <li>3) To note the release of £500k from the corporate Service Transformation Fund, being the indicative capital costs of the required building alterations and improvements</li> <li>4) To delegate authority to the Director of Finance to determine the specific budget ceilings affected.</li> <li>5) To note the comments of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Commission, which considered the proposals on 30 November 2016.</li> </ol>
6.	<b>REASON FOR DECISION</b>	The TNS programme is scoped to identify different ways of organising how services are delivered within the neighbourhoods of the city of Leicester, with a view to reducing the costs of delivery by around 30% while maintaining the quality of our services.
7.	<b>a) KEY DECISION Y/N?</b> b) If yes, was it published 5 clear days in advance? y/n	a) Yes b) Yes
8.	<b>OPTIONS CONSIDERED</b>	A summary of the consultation exercises is reflected in paragraph 2 of the report, and full reports relating to the engagement and consultation are attached at Appendices A and B.
9.	<b>DEADLINE FOR CALL-IN</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 Members of a Scrutiny Commission or any 5 Councillors can ask for the decision to be called-in.</li> <li>• Notification of Call-In with reasons must be made to the Monitoring Officer</li> </ul>	30 January 2017
10.	<b>SIGNATURE OF DECISION MAKER</b> (City Mayor or where delegated by the City Mayor, name of Executive Member)	





---

# ***Transforming Neighbourhood Services North East Area***

Version: Final January 2017

Decision to be taken by: Cllr Kirk Master  
Decision to be taken on: 23 January 2017  
Lead director: John Leach

---

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: Belgrave, Rushey Mead, Troon, Humberstone & Hamilton, Thurncourt
- Report author: Lee Warner
- Author contact details: 454 3542
- Report version number: vs Final January 2017

## 1. Summary

The purpose of this report is to:

- Provide an overview of progress to date of the Transforming Neighbourhood Services (TNS) Programme
- Present a summary of the results of engagement work and consultation carried out in the North East area of the city
- To set out the proposals that are intended to be implemented by the TNS programme in relation to the North East area

The City Mayor and Executive are asked to:

- 1) To note the activity that has taken place to date
- 2) To agree the model as presented in the report into implementation upon completion of outstanding action points including consultation with affected staff
- 3) To note the comments and recommendations of the Neighbourhoods and Community Involvement Scrutiny Commission
- 4) To reflect the anticipated £74.3k p.a. revenue savings in the approved budget and budget strategy, and reduce the budgets accordingly from January 2018.
- 5) To note the release of £500k from the corporate Service Transformation Fund, being the indicative capital costs of the required building alterations and improvements
- 6) To delegate authority to the Director of Finance to determine the specific budget ceilings affected

## 2. Main report:

### 2.1 Background

The TNS programme is scoped to identify different ways of organising how services are delivered within the neighbourhoods of the city of Leicester, with a view to reducing the costs of delivery by around 30% while maintaining the quality of our services.

The programme approach is to consider each of 6 geographical areas in turn to identify methods by which the service delivery model can be transformed through opportunities to co-locate services and make better use of the assets available.

Initially the scope of the programme covered four service areas:

- Community Services
- Libraries

- Adult Skills & Learning
- Neighbourhood based customer services

In addition some other council services with a presence in the neighbourhoods were included where they could form a part of the future delivery model, for example, by sharing locations.

In October 2015 the Council announced a city-wide review of its buildings called “Using Buildings Better”. The Transforming Neighbourhood Services programme now forms part of this wider programme and is extended to include other neighbourhood based service points. In the north east area this has meant the inclusion of council run youth centre buildings. The inclusion in UBB also enables dependencies with other relevant areas of work including a wider review of staff accommodation and channel shift to be better managed.

The full scope of the north east area includes the following buildings:

Property	Ward
Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre	Belgrave
Belgrave Library	Belgrave
Armadale Centre	Humberstone & Hamilton
Hamilton Library & Learning Centre	Humberstone & Hamilton
Netherhall Community Centre	Humberstone & Hamilton
Northfields Neighbourhood Centre	North Evington/Troon
Rushey Mead Library	Rushey Mead
Rushey Mead Recreation Centre	Rushey Mead
Ocean Road Community Centre	Thurncourt
Thurnby Lodge Youth & Community Centre	Thurncourt

Under the Council’s Using Buildings Better programme Children, Young People and Family (CYPF) Centres form part of the Early Help work stream. However CYPF Centres and council pre-school provision are considered within the TNS programme where there are opportunities to achieve joined up solutions for groups of buildings.

## 2.2 Development of the draft model

In order to develop a draft model the following activities have been undertaken:

- Data collection exercise to identify the buildings in scope, costs associated, services provided, usage statistics, historical information
- An initial engagement exercise was carried out for the city as a whole between April and July 2013 to raise awareness and gain an overview of the general views and attitudes of residents towards neighbourhood services
- An in-depth and focussed engagement process was carried out in the north east area between 6th June and 17th July 2016 to collect suggestions and comments from service users and residents
- Analysis of the data collected and the responses received through the engagement exercises to construct a draft model, which was presented to the City Mayor and Executive in August 2016.
- Assessments of equalities impact of the options proposed
- Consultation on the draft model during September and October 2016, involving a series of meetings with resident groups, stakeholder groups and community group and the availability of a form to complete to provide feedback, comments and suggestions against the draft proposals (see section 2.2.1)
- Refinement of the model into that proposed in this report following the results of the consultation and further detailed design work surrounding the proposed projects

### **2.2.1 Engagement and Consultation Activity**

Details of the previous engagement between June- July 2016 have been previously reported. The main outcomes of these previous exercises were:

- Good support for the principle of retaining services over buildings
- Strong support for the co-location of services, providing busy places from which multiple services can be accessed
- Some support for transferring of assets through the Community Asset Transfer procedure
- Some concern to ensure existing groups continue to have fair and equal access should buildings undergo community asset transfer
- Significant support for libraries and the functions they perform and likewise for activities in community and youth centres.
- There is potential for using buildings better by bringing services together in some buildings

Following the previous report to the Executive in August 2016, a consultation exercise has been carried out on the draft proposals that were presented to the City Mayor and Executive at that time. Views were sought on the suitability and practicality of those proposals.

The consultation took place between 12<sup>th</sup> September and 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2016. A wide range of stakeholders developed during the engagement phase were contacted to promote the consultation and to gain views on the proposals. Two large open meetings were held at Hamilton Library and Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre. Around 18 meetings were held with stakeholder groups, community groups who currently use the buildings and informal meetings and conversations were held throughout the consultation period. Ward Councillors and the local MP attended the open events and other meetings. Around 720 residents, stakeholders, partners and service users attended the meetings.



A consultation questionnaire was promoted online and at all Council run buildings and GP surgeries in the area throughout the duration of the exercise. The questionnaire was also available in Gujarati, Punjabi and Urdu. Promotional materials were displayed in a wide range of public buildings including community, youth and leisure centres, GP surgeries, temples and schools. An early press release generated articles in the local newspapers and radio stations.

A full report of the engagement carried out in June and July 2016 is attached to this document as Appendix A

A full report of the consultation carried out in September and October 2016 is attached to this document as Appendix B.

### **2.2.2 Consultation Outcomes and Alterations to the Proposals**

In total, at the closure of the consultation on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October a total of 1,436 completed response forms have been received representing a high response rate. The following points provide a summary of the outcomes of the consultation:

#### **Group Meetings – key outcomes**

- People attending the groups were protective of the sites that they currently use, but there was a general acceptance that locality based services are more important than particular buildings
- There were concerns about the busyness and capacity of some buildings proposed for amalgamation
- There was concern about the impact of co-location of services on existing user groups
- There was concern about the quality of the services proposed for reorganisation under the proposals, and in particular regarding the library service, community events and the lunch club in Belgrave.
- Concerns were raised about costs of using buildings increasing, particularly if they are transferred to other organisations.
- Enquiries and discussions were held around the potential for asset transfer of buildings.
- There is a general concern that training, guidance and support is needed for groups to understand expectations and requirements placed upon groups when entering into asset transfer arrangements.
- There was strong feedback in the Netherhall area that an alternative suggestion should be explored to collocate services in the Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre rather than the Armadale Centre.

#### **Questionnaire – key outcomes**

- There is good support for the services and activities offered by community centres and a high level of support for library services
- A large number of responses were received from Belgrave and Rushey Mead wards regarding the proposals for buildings in this area.
- Many respondents are concerned about the proposal to relocate Belgrave Library to Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre. Key concerns were around the availability of sufficient space and the impact on existing services and activities currently running in both buildings.
- Respondents are concerned to ensure that existing activities and services can

continue under the building changes proposed. This was the case for users of the Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre lunch club and exercise classes.

- There is strong support for the Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre and for the pre-school which operates there and concern that current activities may not be accommodated in the Armadale Youth Centre.
- There is good support for the proposal to improve access to the community hall at Hamilton Library

### **Lessons Learned**

The following are a summary of the lessons learned from the engagement and consultation process:

- The method of engagement with the groups has resulted in a high quality level of response, particularly given the ability to tailor conversations to answer specific concerns when meeting groups individually
- There has been a significantly increased response rate compared to the previous consultation on proposals in the other areas of the city. This could be due to the early engagement of stakeholders prior to the official start of the consultation.
- The overall approach of involving Ward Councillors, the local MP, stakeholders and members of the public early has been good as it helps to ensure that all concerns are heard, and provides sufficient time to respond to these concerns on an evidence basis
- The process undertaken has led to good co-operation between stakeholder individuals and groups, as well as other services
- A similar model of engagement will be used for the other areas of the city
- The process has highlighted the potential staffing impact on staff whose primary base is one of the sites proposed for closure and/or asset transfer and the need to commence an appropriate change consultation process

### **2.2.3 Impact of Consultation on Model**

Following the consultation the following amendments have been made to the proposed model for the north east area:

- Belgrave Library will not move into Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre at this time. There were discussions with residents and service users about moving the library into the neighbourhood centre whilst other changes were also proposed there. The proposal to move the library will therefore not be explored while other operational changes are being implemented at Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre.
- Further consultation will be undertaken on options for the Armadale Youth Centre and Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre. There was significant community support for an alternative option to be considered to retain Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre instead of the Armadale Centre. There was also support from young people for the proposed option to develop the Armadale Centre for community activities.
- Community space and library services will be delivered from the Rushey Mead Recreation Centre. There was strong support for retention of the community space at Rushey Mead and also for the library

## 2.3 Draft Model Summary

### 2.3.1 Principles of the model

The following principles have been used to develop this model:

- Retention of locality based services are a higher priority than the retention of specific buildings
- A key principle of shared buildings providing multiple services
- A reduction of around 30% of current Neighbourhood Services spend is to be achieved.
- The services provided should remain and where possible be enhanced
- At this stage the model is based around the use of the buildings only. The implementation of the changes may have an impact on some staff based at these buildings.
- Opportunities for alternative use should be investigated for buildings identified as surplus to requirements

### 2.3.1 Rationale

A target saving of a 30% reduction in building running costs for Neighbourhood Services buildings has been identified through the TNS programme. In addition there is a requirement to identify building running cost savings for other public facing buildings in the area under the Using Buildings Better programme and via other elements of the Using Buildings Better programme including staff accommodation and channel shift.

The proposals are to invest in well located and well used buildings to collocate services. This was the most popular suggestion for re-organising services during the engagement period. The following buildings are proposed based on analysis of the responses from the stakeholder engagement exercises and local buildings data.

### 2.3.2 Draft Model in detail

The overall model is to reduce the number of buildings in operation by combining the services provided into fewer, multi-purpose centres. The main focus of these centres will be Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre and Belgrave Library, Rushey Mead Recreation Centre, one of the two buildings located on Grantham Road in Netherhall, Hamilton Library and Thurnby Lodge Youth and Community Centre.

The following section describes the proposed model in relation to each building in the area.

#### **Belgrave Ward**

*(Some concern was expressed during the consultation with regard to the proposal to move Belgrave Library into Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre. Some stakeholders were keen to be involved in proposals to review room hire arrangements to generate income for the Neighbourhood Centre.)*

The recommendation is retain the library service at Belgrave Library on Cossington Street at this time. Also to change operations at Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre and to invest in the building to free up more space to increase income. The location of the

library service in Belgrave will be reviewed after operational changes have been embedded at Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre.

### **Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre**

- Redecorate some areas of the building including the main hall
- Work with centre users to change lunch club provision. Work with partners to develop a reduced size kitchen facility suitable for community use. It is likely that the current operating model will change and consideration will have to be given to the capacity to cook a high volume of meals onsite.
- Move adult learning classrooms into Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre to deliver more English language and other classes
- Review room hire arrangements to free up more space for additional activities and to increase income.
- Explore car parking controls to improve availability for centre users

### **Belgrave Library**

- Retain the library service at the current location at this time
- Review service operations in line with consultation feedback to improve efficiency
- Review the location of the Belgrave library service after operational changes have been embedded at Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre
- Install library and customer self-service terminals to provide additional access to council services

### **Rushey Mead Ward**

*(There was concern regarding the space available for bringing services together in either building as currently configured. There was interest from a number of groups in the potential for Community Asset Transfer of one of the buildings).*

The recommendation is to combine library services and community activities at the Rushey Mead Recreation Centre. Investment will be made to reconfigure the layout of the building to free up more space.

### **Rushey Mead Recreation Centre**

- Invest in the building to free up additional space
- Work with stakeholders to combine staffed library services and community activities at this centre
- Install library self-service equipment

### **Rushey Mead Library**

- Move library services in to Rushey Mead Recreation Centre
- Explore a range of options for disposal of Rushey Mead Library including lease, sale or demolition.

### **Troon & North Evington Wards**

*(There was some support for Community Asset Transfer as an option for Northfields Neighbourhood Centre under the proposal.)*

### **Northfields Neighbourhood and Youth Centre**

- Dispose of the building as a community resource. Explore options including community asset transfer, rental or sale of the centre or reuse of the centre.
- If groups need to move, work with them to identify the best location for their

needs

- Explore alternative options for delivering youth sessions in the area, including street based sessions

### **Humberstone & Hamilton Ward**

*(There was local concern regarding the proposal to transfer community activities to the Armadale Centre and an alternative suggestion retain Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre instead of the Armadale. There was support for the initial proposal to improve access to the community hall at Hamilton Library.)*

It is recommended to undertake a short period of further consultation to include consideration of an alternative proposal for Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre and the Armadale Centre.

### **Armadale Youth Centre and Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre**

- Consult on additional options for Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre and Armadale Centre.

### **Hamilton Library & Learning Centre**

- Redevelop the building as “Hamilton Library and Community Centre”
- Improve access to the hall for community use
- Review service operations in line with consultation feedback to improve efficiency
- Install a customer self-service facility to enable additional access to council services

### **Thurncourt Ward**

#### **Ocean Road Community Centre**

- Explore options for disposal of the building including demolition or sale
- Work with groups to identify the best location for their needs

#### **Thurnby Lodge Youth and Community Centre**

- Retain the youth and community centre
- Increase use of the youth and community spaces to accommodate some relocated activities
- Explore ways of reducing centre running costs with existing partners

## **2.4 Costs and Benefits**

### **2.4.1 Current Costs**

#### **Neighbourhood Services**

The budgeted running costs (based on financial year 2015 / 16) for **Neighbourhood Services** buildings scoped into the north east area are shown in the table below:

<b>Neighbourhood Services Buildings</b>	<b>Building running costs budget 2015/16</b>
Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre	£78,100

Belgrave Library	£25,700
Hamilton Library & Learning Centre	£30,300
Netherhall Community Centre	£19,000
Northfields Neighbourhood Centre	£22,000
Rushey Mead Library	£14,800
Rushey Mead Recreation Centre	£11,000
Ocean Road Community Centre	£9,500
Thurnby Lodge Youth & Community Centre	£29,200
<b>Total</b>	<b>£239,600</b>

The total Neighbourhood Services budget figure of £239,600 provides a guide savings target of £71,900 (30%) for the asset based review only.

### Youth Services

The budgeted running costs (based on the financial 2014 / 15) for Youth service run buildings scoped into the north east area are shown in the table below.

<b>Youth Services Buildings</b>	<b>Budgeted Service Building Running Cost</b>
Armadale Youth Centre	£9,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>£9,500</b>

### 2.4.2 One-off costs

In order to support the proposals, investment is required for building enabling works. A contingency sum is reserved for unforeseen costs.

For the implementation of this model initial visual building surveys have been carried out to estimate the costs to carry out the alterations required. The following table shows indicative capital costs to carry out the work required:

<b>Budget</b>	<b>Estimated Allocation</b>
Building works	£400k
Contingency	£100k
<b>Total</b>	<b>£500k</b>

Costs include a provision for internal and professional fees. Funding for these one-off costs will be sourced from the Corporate Transformation Budget as per a previous agreement.

### 2.4.3 Financial Benefits

At the point of releasing the buildings the following financial benefits will be available (full year basis):

<b>Building</b>	<b>Efficiencies (1 Year)</b>	<b>Efficiencies (5 Years)</b>	<b>Effective from</b>
Bring adult learning provision into Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre and increase income target	£23k	£115k	Jan 2018
Netherhall/Armada Centres*	£10k	£50k	TBA*
Northfields Neighbourhood Centre	£17k	£85k	Jan 2018
Rushey Mead buildings	£14.8k	£74k	Jan 2018
Ocean Road Community Centre	£9.5k	£47.5k	Jan 2018
<b>Total</b>	<b>£74.3k</b>	<b>£371.50k</b>	

\*The combined saving from Netherhall and Armada Centres will be released following a separate decision.

Comparing the total savings shown in the table above (£74,300) with the total Neighbourhood Services building running costs of the area (£239,600) shows that this is in line with the principle of the programme of aiming to reduce building running costs by at least 30%. Under the proposals the combined saving stated for the Netherhall and Armada buildings is dependent upon the outcome of further consultation.

#### **Notes on the above tables:**

Efficiency savings are based on the budgeted building running costs for 2015/16 minus the non-transferable income generated by the building.

#### **Additional financial benefits**

The proposed savings relate specifically to building running costs incurred by Neighbourhood Services. However the proposed changes also help to reduce existing financial pressures on building management and maintenance costs. In addition, the proposals for Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre will negate the need for significant capital investment to refurbish the extensive kitchen which would otherwise be required for the existing service model to continue.

The model is in line with a review of the Neighbourhood Services organisation which has already been completed and which was implemented in January 2016 and which delivers £586k savings.

### 2.4.4 Non-financial benefits

There are a number of non-financial benefits that apply to this draft model as follows:

- The result would be continued delivery of services while achieving a 30% reduction in spending

- The model is in line with the majority of views received from the engagement process i.e. increase co-location of services in the most appropriate buildings for the area.
- Convenient, co-located services including some new services
- Better use of buildings, especially with regard to community space.
- Investment in multi-service sites ensures the longer-term viability of the services in the area
- A potential reduction in energy use of approximately 30% and associated carbon dioxide savings that will contribute towards achieving corporate environmental improvement objective to reduce the council's greenhouse gas emissions

## 2.5 Risks and Dependencies

The following list describes the risks and issues currently identified

- The overall model is dependent on the credibility, acceptability and quality of the offers made by other organisations to take over the costs and management of the buildings made available through asset transfer, as this will form the basis of the efficiencies available. Support sessions for community groups will be made available from an independent organisation. The sessions will aim to provide advice, guidance and support in relation to managing community asset transfers and the expectations and requirements made of the community groups.
- Potential implications relating to cleaning staff could financially impact on some community groups dependent on the service provision they intend to offer through asset transfer. This should be explored at the support sessions stage.
- For all improvement works the identification and remedial actions required arising from the presence of asbestos may increase the costs and delay completion of any works.
- Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre is a grade II listed building. Permission to implement building improvements will be required from the planning section with possible impacts on timescales and cost.
- There are some individual groups in the area which have specific needs which may be difficult to relocate in alternative locations. In some cases the most suitable alternative locations may be available in non-council settings.
- There are a number of interdependencies to consider as part of the TNS work which includes the remodelling and reduction of the Council's early help services (youth service, children centres and family support services) Proposals from TNS and Early Help Remodelling include the disposal (meaning sale, transfer or demolition) of the Northfields Neighbourhood and Youth Centre and Northfields Children Young People and Families Centre (CYPF) which are both located within the North East.

The following list describes the dependencies that have been identified to this point:

- The Using Buildings Better programme encompasses six work streams to review the wider council buildings estate. TNS proposals will need to link in with assumptions and proposals put forward by other work streams as part of the overall picture. There will be crossover with the accommodation strategy where back office functions are linked to TNS proposals.
- Early years remodelling Board will review council provision of pre-school and children, young people and family centres. Decisions will impact upon the delivery of services in some Neighbourhood Buildings, and on assumptions with



- regard to alternative provision in the local area.
- The completion of the projects will rely significantly on other support services within the council, particularly property, planning, and housing.

### 3. Details of Scrutiny

The Scrutiny Commission has been kept updated with regard to the progress of TNS and recently Using Buildings Better Programmes.

The final proposals were presented to the Neighbourhood Services and Community Involvement Scrutiny Commission on 30 November 2016.

### 4. Financial, legal and other implications

#### 4.1 Financial implications

The proposals in this report would deliver the target savings of 30% of premises running costs, namely annual savings of £74.3k. Some £16k would be achieved in 2017/18, with the full year effect from 2018/19 onwards.

The estimated £500k capital cost of improving the retained buildings would be met from the corporate service transformation fund.

In the event that no changes to service provision are made, then significant capital investment in the outdated kitchen facilities at Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre would nonetheless be required.

Colin Sharpe, Head of Finance, ext. 37 4081

#### 4.2 Legal implications

This report takes the product of the North East Area Consultation in to consideration in the decision making process in a transparent way. The responses are clearly detailed within the report and integrated within the assessment.

In relation to the alternative option put forward during the consultation process for the Armadale Youth Centre and Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre as this appears to be a significant change, given that the original proposal was to close one and retain the other, fairness and legitimate expectation dictates a further proportionate re-consultation only on the alternative option.

In relation to the period for re-consultation, provided there is not a large volume of new information the consultation period could be less than 6 weeks as consultees already have considered the alternative and commented.

If the model is approved there will be a requirement for legal support in relation to legal

agreements relating to/resulting from the model and it is advised that this is sought as soon as possible in the delivery phase.

Jenis Taylor, Commercial, Property & Planning Team, Legal Services Ext 37 1405

#### 4.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

The Council has a corporate carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) reduction target of 50% of the 2008/09 level by 2025/26 and the consolidation of neighbourhood buildings and the co-location of services will contribute towards achieving this target. It is estimated that a 30% reduction in energy use and associated carbon dioxide emissions could be achieved through implementation of the proposed model.

- Duncan Bell, Environment Team (x37 2251)

#### 4.4 Equalities Implications

##### 4.4 Equalities Implications

The council's Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) as set out in the Equality Act 2010 requires decision makers to be aware of and take account of the impact of its proposals on those likely to be affected. The process undertaken to determine the development of proposals which would produce the required savings highlighted in the report is based on consultation with those communities affected - as detailed in the appendix describing consultation undertaken and the responses received. Respondents were clear as to what local services would benefit them and meet their particular needs - the bulk of which involve continued social interaction and the benefits this provides them in terms of improved health (access to exercise and lunch clubs), cultural expression (celebration of cultural events), and practicing their faith (facilities for their shared prayers and celebration of their faith), opportunity to socially engage with others they identify with (youth groups). The proposals set out in the report acknowledge and for the most part reflect these communities' priorities and how they will continue to be met. Where there is uncertainty as to how these will be met, there is an expressed commitment to work with the group to best accommodate their specific needs. The proposals also reflect the work being undertaken by the council in regard to channel shifting and it is the proposals for change in the form of self-service that receive most concern. The mitigating actions highlighted by other identical channel shift proposals that are being successfully implemented will form the basis for mitigating actions for these concerns. The consultation was thorough in involving the main groups of people who are local service users with the protected characteristics of age (young as well as elderly), race, disability, and religion and belief which reflect the main groups of people using these community buildings scoped into this TNS review.

Irene Kszyk, Corporate Equalities Lead, ext 374147.

#### 4.5 Planning implications

The following considerations apply to buildings proposed for disposal:

<b>Site</b>	<b>Planning policy</b>	<b>Constraints</b>
Netherhall Community Centre	No designation, residential acceptable in principle.	50% of site flood zone 3, Critical drainage area.  This would restrict amount of residential development. Sustainable Development may be required. Trees on site.
Rushey Mead Library	Retail Centre, retail and community uses acceptable.	Landfill Buffer, meaning mitigation may be required for landfill gas.
Rushey Mead Recreation Centre	No designation, Residential acceptable in principle.	SE area of site (approx. 30%) Flood Zone 2. This might limit the amount of residential development. Landfill Buffer just to E of site.
Northfield Neighbourhood Centre	No Designation, Residential acceptable in principle.	Critical Drainage Area meaning sustainable drainage may be required, Trees on site.
Ocean Road Community Centre	No designation. Residential acceptable in principle.	Critical Drainage Area, 100% Flood Zone 3, 50% near Main River Bank EA access. This may limit the amount of residential development possible on the site. Trees on site.

Alternative uses/development, including residential, acceptable subject to need for retention of community facilities.

<b>Site</b>	<b>Planning policy</b>	<b>Constraints</b>
Armadale Youth Centre 0624	No designation.	Southern edge of the site is in a Main Bank Buffer zone for Scraftoft Brook. Critical Drainage Area so SuDS would be required. Education, community and leisure uses likely to be acceptable. Residential would have to be carefully considered due to relationship with neighbouring uses and the nature of the area.

Belgrave library 2033	No designation.	Building is locally listed therefore presumption in favour of retention. Article 4 direction in progress, so external alterations likely to require PP. Education, community and leisure uses likely to be acceptable however as there are houses nearby noise controls might be sought. Flood Zone 2 so FRA might be required for COU. Critical Drainage Area so SuDS required for any new development eg car parking.
Comments issued 11/11/2016		

4.6 Other Implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

A range of services deliver in the buildings scoped into the north east area. Service delivery strategies will need to be aligned to ensure a robust service offer for the area as a whole. The services working with the programme are:

- Neighbourhood Services
- Adult Skills & Learning
- Neighbourhood based customer services
- Youth Services

**5. Background information and other papers:**

None

**6. Summary of appendices:**

Appendix A: TNS north east area engagement report, August 2016

Appendix B: TNS north east area consultation report, October 2016

**7. Is this a private report (If so, please indicated the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?**

No

**8. Is this a “key decision”?**

Yes.

**9. If a key decision please explain reason**

The decision affects changes to service delivery in 5 wards in north eas Leicester.



# Transforming Neighbourhood Services

## North East Area Engagement

Findings of the focus groups and public consultation  
As at 18<sup>th</sup> July 2016

*Prepared by:*

- *City Development & Neighbourhoods*
- *with the support of Transformation & Service Improvement Team*



*This report provides a summary of the findings of the focus groups and public consultation.*

*It includes information about:*

- The issues and options under consideration;*
- The consultation method;*
- The public response and views expressed;*
- The proposals made in light of what was learnt.*



## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report summarises the outcomes of the focus groups and public consultation on draft proposals for the reorganisation and consolidation of building stock in the North East area of the city, being managed as part of the Transforming Neighbourhood Services (TNS) Programme.

A copy of the consultation form used for the exercise is included at the end of this document.

This period of consultation is part of a longer period of such activity as follows:

- An initial engagement exercise was carried out between April and July 2013 to raise awareness and gain an overview of the general views and attitudes of residents towards neighbourhood services
- Focussed engagement with residents and service users in the North East area of the city between June and July 2016 to help develop draft proposals for the transformation of the area **(subject of this report)**.
- Draft proposals are being developed based on the evidence received along with factual information collected from the relevant services and information around future usage from service providers and funders.
- A further period of consultation following completion of draft proposals will be held prior to any decisions being made

The consultation period ran from 6<sup>th</sup> June 2016 until 17<sup>th</sup> July 2016 and was carried out in two main parts:

- A series of meetings, by arrangement and request, with various drop-in sessions and focus groups, resident groups, community groups and voluntary organisations who use the facilities being investigated by the review
- A form available in various locations across the area and online for people to provide individual responses and comments

In addition some groups made separate submissions which were not part of the questionnaire.

In general responses and comments received were all supportive of the buildings that each individual used, however, a general agreement is apparent that the services provided are more important to people than the buildings from which they are currently provided.

A total of 9 focus groups were set up, one for working age and elderly people in each geographical area, one for young people at each youth centre and also for area representatives from the Young Person's Council. A total of 91 people attended the focus group meetings. The main messages drawn from the meetings held with groups are that:

- There was significant support for the activities in community centres which are important are important for local areas and also for libraries and the functions they perform
- There was good support for youth sessions from youth centre users. The key building consideration was the provision of a safe space which the young people felt was theirs.
- There was a general agreement with all of the groups that the services provided were more important than particular buildings
- There was general agreement with all groups that savings can be achieved by reorganising services to make better use of buildings
- There is some support for transferring of assets through the Community Asset Transfer procedure for less well used buildings, and also some concerns about potential transfer to community groups.

Between 6 June and 17 July a questionnaire containing details of the proposals and a 'tear-off' response

## Appendix A - Transforming Neighbourhood Services – North East Area Engagement Report July 2016

form was also used to gather opinions on the proposals. These were widely distributed in the area, and a total of 5,000 leaflets were circulated. At the closure of the consultation on the 17<sup>th</sup> July 2016, a total of 1,191 completed form responses were received. People were asked to identify which services and centres they used and the main reasons why. The main reasons for using services were:

- Facilities/services (half of all responses)
- Range of services available (quarter of all responses)
- Ease of access
- Friendliness of staff

Residents and service users were also asked for their suggestions for reorganising services in the area to make savings. The main suggestions drawn from the responses were:

- Bring services together in fewer buildings
- Deliver extra services in existing buildings to increase use, for example Adult Learning sessions
- Make changes to run buildings more efficiently, for example install energy saving lighting, review heating and room allocation
- Better promotion to increase the use of existing buildings

In addition many service users responded to highlight the value of local services to their communities to suggest certain buildings be retained under council control.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Transforming Neighbourhood Services – North East Area**

The TNS programme aims to identify different ways of organising how services are delivered within the neighbourhoods of the city of Leicester, with a view to reducing the costs of delivery by around 30% while maintaining the quality of our services.

The programme has identified an approach through which the city is divided into 6 geographical areas and these are explored in turn to identify ways to transform services through opportunities to co-locate services and make better use of the assets available.

The scope of the programme covers public facing service areas. The services scoped into the North East area are:

- Neighbourhood Services - Community Services and Libraries
- Adult Skills & Learning
- Youth Centres

The buildings within the scope of the North East are:

- Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre
- Belgrave Library
- Armadale Centre
- Hamilton Library & Learning Centre
- Netherhall Community Centre
- Northfields Neighbourhood Centre
- Rushey Mead Library
- Rushey Mead Recreation Centre
- Ocean Road Community Centre
- Thurnby Lodge Youth & Community Centre

## **CONSULTATION METHOD**

### **Objectives and techniques**

The public engagement period for the North East area ran from 6 June – 17 July 2016. The aims of the engagement were to promote awareness of the TNS programme in the local area, to identify and engage stakeholders, to gather information on how neighbourhood services and buildings are currently used in the area and to collect any suggestions for change.

This consultation builds upon previous development and engagement work undertaken for the TNS programme as a whole with the goal to develop a model for the North East area of the city. Overall, the following activities have taken place:

- Data collection exercise to identify the buildings in scope, costs associated, services provided (both internally and commissioned through voluntary sector organisations), usage statistics, historical information
- An initial city-wide engagement exercise was carried out between April and July 2013 to raise awareness and gain an overview of the general views and attitudes of residents towards neighbourhood services
- A more in-depth and focussed engagement process was carried out between 6<sup>th</sup> June and 17<sup>th</sup> July 2016 to collect suggestions and comments from service users and residents (**Subject of this report**)

The next steps are:

- Analysis of the data collected and the responses received through the engagement exercises to construct a draft model, which will be presented to the City Mayor and Executive.
- Consultation on the draft model following this, prior to a finalised set of proposals being submitted for approval

Details of the previous city-wide engagement between April – July 2013 have been previously reported. The main outcomes of this previous exercise were:

- Good support for the principle of prioritising services over buildings
- Strong support for the co-location of services, providing busy places from which multiple services can be accessed

This period of consultation has been carried out in two main parts as follows:

- A series of meetings with residents, service users and stakeholder. Initial drop in sessions were held at buildings in each geographical area to promote the engagement exercise and provide information about the process. Initial comments were collected at these sessions. Focus groups were held to discuss thoughts, ideas and suggestions about the services and buildings in question.
- A form available in various locations across the area and online for people to provide individual responses and comments

In addition some groups made separate submissions which were not part of the questionnaire.

The details of the meetings held are as follows:

#### **Drop in sessions**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Ward</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>
Rushey Mead Library	Rushey Mead	14 June 2016, Tues	4:30 – 6:00pm

Appendix A - Transforming Neighbourhood Services – North East Area Engagement Report July 2016

Northfields Neighbourhood Centre	Troon / North Evington	14 June 2016, Tues	6:30 – 8:00pm
Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre	Belgrave	16 June, Thurs	4:00 – 7:00pm
Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre	Humberstone & Hamilton	20 June, Mon	1:30 – 3:30pm
Thurnby Lodge	Thurncourt	22 June, Weds	3:30 – 6:30

**Focus groups**

Location	Ward	Aimed at	Date	Time
Rushey Mead Library	Rushey Mead	Adult stakeholders	4 <sup>th</sup> July, Mon	6-7pm
Thurnby Lodge Community Centre	Thurncourt	Adult stakeholders	5 July, Tues	6-7pm
Armada Youth Centre	Humberstone & Hamilton	Young people under 18yrs	6 July, Weds	7-8pm
Northfields Youth Centre	Troon/North Evington	Young people under 18yrs	6 July, Weds	8-9pm
Thurnby Lodge Youth Centre	Thurncourt	Young people under 18yrs	7 July, Thurs	7-8pm
Armada Centre	Humberstone & Hamilton	Adult stakeholders	11 <sup>th</sup> July, Mon	6-7pm
Young Peoples Council	All	Young people under 18yrs	12 July, Tues	6-7pm
Northfields Neighbourhood Centre	Troon/North Evington	Adult stakeholders	12 <sup>th</sup> July, Tues	6-7pm
Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre	Belgrave	Adult stakeholders	14 July, Thurs	4:30-5:30pm
Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre	Belgrave	Adult stakeholders	14 July, Thurs	6-7pm

Alongside this a number of informal meetings have taken place with individual stakeholders and groups to discuss the area. Adult Learners attending English speaking classes in Abbey Primary School and Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre were also engaged by the session leader and notes of the sessions are included here.

A leaflet containing details of the engagement and a ‘tear-off’ response form was used to gather opinions on the proposals. A total of 5,000 leaflets were widely distributed in the area. The form was made available on the Council’s open consultation website. Translations of the text were made available in Gujarati, Punjabi and Urdu.

The form was also available at all public facing Council buildings in the North East area and online from 6<sup>th</sup> June 2016 to the 17<sup>th</sup> July 2016.

## **PUBLIC RESPONSE AND VIEWS EXPRESSED**

### **Drop-in sessions and Focus Groups**

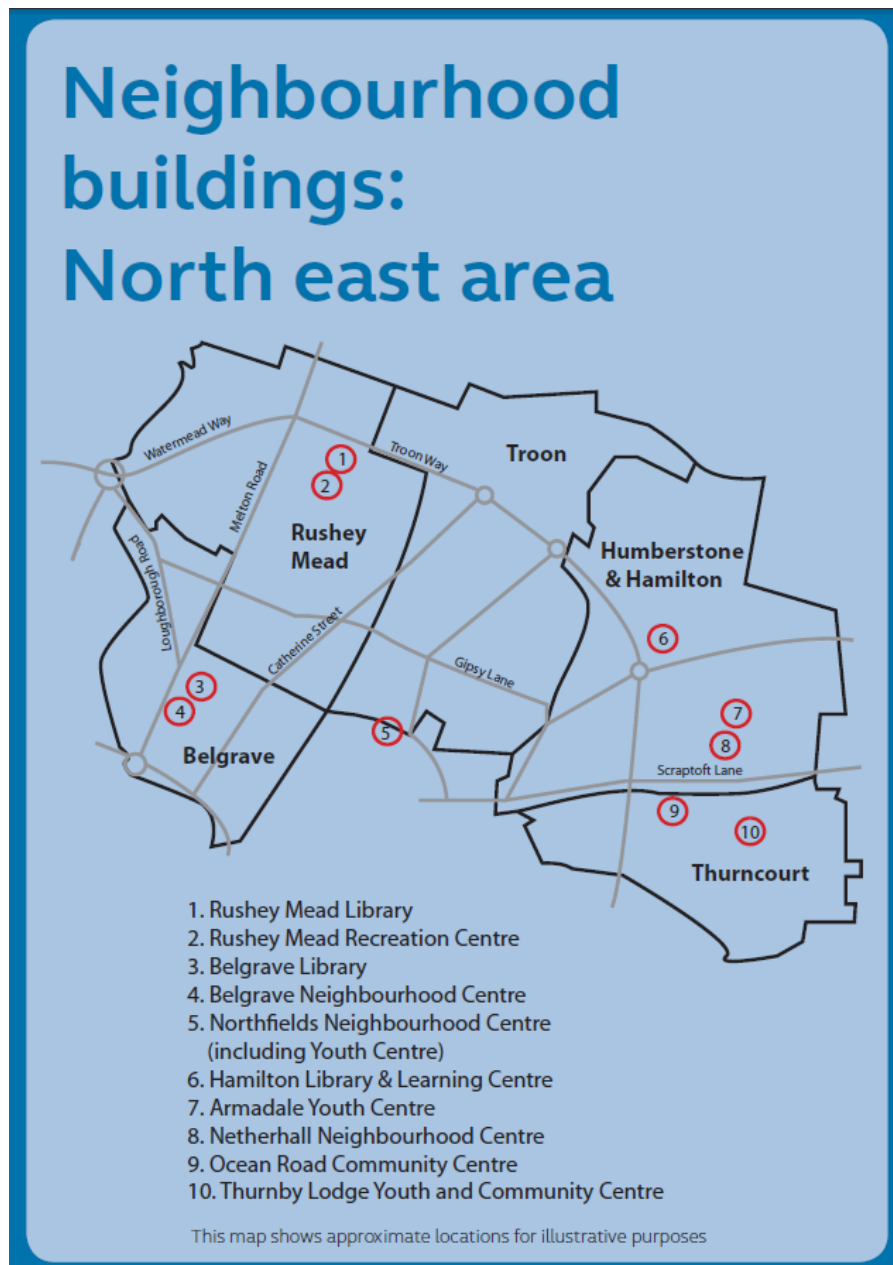
A series of drop in sessions and focus group meetings were held attended by residents, service users, community organisations and stakeholders in the North East area of the city.

Following lessons learned in previous areas of the city focus groups were identified based on where people live and how old they are. Two separate age ranges were identified as follows:

- Young people (under 18yrs)
- Adults (working age and senior citizens)

Following a lesson learned from previous engagement exercises, the children and young People were engaged through support of representatives of the Young Person's Council, and through focus groups taking place at all three youth centres.

The North East area of the city can be subdivided into five smaller geographic areas, relating to the wards they support. The map below shows these, which have been labelled as Belgrave, Rushey Mead, Troon, Humberstone & Hamilton and Thurncourt:



A total of nine focus groups were set up, one for working age and older people in each geographical area. The drop-in sessions were used to generate interest in volunteering for the focus groups.

Meetings were held, in a workshop format, for each of the focus groups in order to get opinions, based on responses to the following questions:

- Which centres do you use and why? Which centres do you not use and why?
- Would you use another centre if yours closed and why?
- What are your key concerns for the services in your area?

A total of 91 people attended the focus group meetings.

#### **General Queries and Views arising from meetings**

- There was a general agreement with all of the groups that the services provided were more important than particular buildings

## Appendix A - Transforming Neighbourhood Services – North East Area Engagement Report July 2016

- People attending the groups were protective of the sites that they currently use, but there was a general acceptance that locality based services are more important than particular buildings
- Concerns were raised about costs of using buildings increasing, particularly if they are transferred to other organisations.
- Enquiries and discussions were held around the potential for asset transfer of buildings.

### **Drop-In Sessions**

#### **Rushey Mead Library, Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> June, 4:30 – 6:00pm**

##### Comments:

- A library service should remain in the Rushey Mead area
- The library is a local community hub and important for local people to stay connected to information & community
- Some users may not be able to access Belgrave Library and not on a daily basis
- The Library and Recreation Centre are very close together and there is potential to amalgamate services into one building
- The recreation centre is busy and is the bigger building
- The library has the better location for car parking
- Could library book shelves be made more flexible (put on wheels) to create community space when needed?
- Need to consider how to keep the Lunch club at Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre sustainable for the future
- The library was not so busy at lunchtimes as school children are no longer allowed to leave the school and the school libraries have had investment
- Cost of extending the library was felt to be prohibitive.

#### **Northfields Neighbourhood Centre, Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> June, 6:30 – 8:00pm**

##### Comments:

- The groups using the centre place high value on it
- Overall activity has been low but evening use is good, especially due to one large regular user group
- The centre was busier in the past, but is not staffed and is often closed during the daytime.
- Better external signage is required with clear contact details for people to make bookings.
- There is now a lot happening within centre and it is important to the community to keep this going
- There was interest in potential Community Asset Transfer
- There was concern that a non-local group could take on the building and displace existing users.
- There were questions regarding the status Community groups should have to take on a building.
- Some people were not keen on seeing the building asset transferred as it is a valuable local resource. However, if community groups could open up and staff the building during the day this would be welcomed.
- Room hire rates should be reduced as it is too expensive for community groups to hire the large hall regularly.
- Could other council services share the building – for example the Housing Office

#### **Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre, Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> June, 3:30 – 6:30pm**

##### Comments:

##### (Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre)

- BNC is a very busy centre and surely pays for itself – could we see the balance sheet



## Appendix A - Transforming Neighbourhood Services – North East Area Engagement Report July 2016

- BNC should not be included in scope as it is propping up other centres
- Ideally nothing should change – it is important that the community doesn't suffer as a result of any changes.
- There was a general consensus the Centre should not be offered for Community Asset Transfer because it would fail if it went to any one community group.
- Some people attending had been using the centre for 40 years.
- It is important to recognise the social function of the centre in people's lives – they attend a wide range of activities from lunch club to exercise to social groups.
- WCs are too narrow - if there is investment they should be redesigned.
- There is concern about the future of the membership scheme which has operated at the centre for a number of years.
- The lunch club has a long history, is very popular and combats social isolation – it is important to keep it running.
- Access to Customer Services needed at BNC, but with assistance for non-English speakers. Non-English speakers struggle to complete application forms.
- Recommendation that next consultation stage of TNS is promoted through local radio
- Recommendation that promotional materials are taken to local temples.

### (Belgrave Library)

- The library is an important community hub and is crucial for people who have just moved into the area
- Many people use the library every day to read the foreign newspapers
- The library is very busy and is used by all age ranges with especially high use by children and young people and by older people.

### (Rushey Mead Recreation Centre)

- Rushey Mead Rec is too small could some groups use BNC instead?

### Summary

- The key message was that Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre and Library services should be kept under council control and that there are opportunities to move in additional services to make the buildings more efficient.

### **Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre, Monday 20<sup>th</sup> June 1:30 – 3:30**

#### Comments:

- Groups discussed the possibility of relocating services into one of the two buildings (Armadale/Netherhall)
- The concern was whether all timetabled activities could be accommodated in one building at the same time.
- The main concern is the impact on local children – the nursery and dance group have 100 – 200 children on their books between them
- There was a discussion around which was the better building to retain
- There is potential interest in Community Asset Transfer of Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre.
- Group leaders will arrange a visit to the Armadale Centre to assess the suitability of the building for their activities

## Appendix A - Transforming Neighbourhood Services – North East Area Engagement Report July 2016

- Some groups use several buildings for their activities so are more flexible.

### **Thurnby Lodge Youth and Community Centre, Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> June, 3:30 – 6:30pm**

Comments from Ocean Road Users:

- The users considered the use of TL and OR and were concerned it would not be possible to relocate Ocean Road activities to TL give the current timetables
- Ocean Road is located in a quiet residential area with many older people. Alternative use of the centre would have to take this setting into account.
- There was some interest in Community Asset Transfer – building running costs for Ocean Road were requested
- It was felt that Thurncourt has had low investment in recent years
- Ocean Road users are aware that Thurnby Lodge has very good community use and it should be noted that the Centre is on the periphery of the city and serves an important social function.

Comments from Thurnby Lodge Community Centre Users

- Thurnby Lodge Community Centre is very well used by a wide range of local community groups
- There have been tensions in the local area over the past few years and it is crucial this background is taken into account when developing proposals
- The Thurnby Lodge CC ball court is a very well used facility
- Car parking facility is well used and can be full at times
- The Community Association play an important role in the success of the centre.

### **Focus Group Meetings**

#### **Rushey Mead Library, 4th July, Mon 6-7pm**

Lead: Adrian Wills, Head of Neighbourhood Services

Attending: 28 members of public, users of Rushey Mead Library, Rushey Mead Recreation Centre and Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre

#### **Comments**

- The library and community centre are the hub of this community. We would be sad to see either building go, but appreciate the council must withdraw from some buildings
- There was general agreement that services are more important than buildings.
- Rushey Mead Library service is crucial to the community. Belgrave Library is too busy but we can read the newspapers and study at Rushey.
- Rushey Mead Recreation Centre serves an important function especially for older people to combat social isolation.
- The council was asked to consider the wider social benefit of continuing to provide community meeting spaces for older people keeping them fit and active, and potentially avoiding other costs incurred by loneliness and inactivity.
- It was noted that the recreation centre and the library get good use in Rushey Mead.
- A wide range of ages make use of these buildings – from weekly Toddler Time sessions in the library to daily older people's groups in the Recreation Centre.

All agreed that service provision should be retained at Rushey Mead. The group considered whether it is possible to combine the library and community space functions in one building?

- This would be a good solution in theory and it would be beneficial to deliver services under one roof

## Appendix A - Transforming Neighbourhood Services – North East Area Engagement Report July 2016

- However the problem is that both buildings are quite small – it is difficult to see how the services could fit together
- Is it possible to extend one of the buildings to accommodate both services?
- The library is well located in the small shopping precinct and with good parking available.
- An alternative solution would be to extend or reconfigure the recreation centre

The group considered an alternative idea to retain one building and asset transfer the other to a community group. In theory this would potentially retain the use of both buildings for the community whilst reducing council building running costs.

- There were concerns that this may cause conflict between groups and lead to potential exclusion.
- There were general concerns that groups would be displaced and have nowhere to go.
- Groups were reassured that managers would work with them to find alternative solutions if changes were necessary.
- There was interest in seeing the building running costs for both buildings. These are available on the consultation website and a copy will be left at the library for information.

The group commented that there were few alternative community buildings in the area – there is one church and one temple in close proximity.

Some attendees also use Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre on a daily basis. Some are elderly users and have been using centre attending Belgrave NC for over 18 years.

### **Thurnby Lodge Community Centre, 5 July, Tues 6-7pm**

Lead: Adrian Wills, Head of Neighbourhood Services

Attending: 12.

Buildings used: Ocean Road and Thurnby Lodge Community Centres

#### **Comments**

##### Thurnby Lodge Youth & Community Centre

- Thurnby Lodge is the most well used centre in the area.
- Some groups numbers are reducing but group leaders are looking for promote these sessions and are confident there will be interest
- The centre is vital in the local area for social use, health and wellbeing, for example through the provision of activities such as Tea Dances and Silver Threads
- Lots to do, helps to overcoming isolation and keeps people active
- However the centre is in need of some internal refurbishment

##### Ocean Road Community Centre

- There is no car dedicated parking and the centre is not felt to be less accessible
- Used a lot by younger groups for dance classes
- Children attending dance are local, mainly walking to the centre. However the sessions are getting more popular with some attendees from across the city
- Senior groups using Ocean Road may not be able to walk to Thurnby Lodge Centre if groups are relocated - this would leave them completely isolated
- However Ocean Road is in need of investment
- The centre has potential but also some limitations.
- A new pop up café has been really busy
- Used to have a lot of private party hire
- There maybe some interest locally in taking on Ocean Road.
- It was suggested a kitchen facility was need to make the building ready for a CAT transfer

In General

- There is a perception that other areas of the city have better provision
- The centres could be better promoted. For example it would be useful if “what’s on” information was released at least once per year
- There is a perception that the number of older people who feel isolated is higher in Thurncourt than in other areas of the city
- Many groups already use the 55th Scout Hut as well with day time use increasing.

**Armadale Youth Centre, 6 July, Weds, 7-8pm (Young people)**

Lead: David Thrussell, Head of Youth Services

Attending: 6 youth centre members

**Comments**

Q: Which community buildings do you use?

- Armadale and Thurnby Lodge Youth Centre. Many use both buildings depending on when sessions are available.

Q: What do you like about the Armadale Centre?

- Keeps kids off the streets and reduces crime
- We can make new friends
- Good location as we can walk to the centre
- Support of youth workers is valuable
- Would like more sessions – 7-9 every week day evening
- We just stay at home when we don’t come here

Q: What does a youth centre need to provide?

- Help & advice
- Games equipment such as a ping pong and pool table
- Kitchen
- A big space to chill

Q: What improvements could we make?

- Wi-Fi service

Q: What do you think about the idea of sharing your space with other groups?

- Other groups can use the centre during the day.
- If we relocated to a shared, would the setting be age appropriate?
- Young people need space to themselves when it’s their session times

Q: Could you move to another Centre?

- One member wanted to stay at Armadale as Netherhall Community Centre is “just a hall”. We have just decorated this and took ownership. This is home.
- Young people commented that we are wasting money as nether hall community centre and Armadale youth centre are so close together.
- Either way the ball court is important and is always in use regardless of whether youth sessions are running

**Northfields Youth Centre, 6 July, Weds, 8-9pm (Young people)**

Lead: David Thrussell, Head of Youth Services

## Appendix A - Transforming Neighbourhood Services – North East Area Engagement Report July 2016

Attending: 6 youth centre members

### Comments

Q: Which community buildings do you use?

- Mostly just Northfields Centre
- One member also uses Belgrave but has to get dropped by car
- Some members have been coming since they were 7yrs old. There are only 2 sessions a week now.
- This is the only thing here. There is a Play Barn but it only goes up to 15yrs

Q: What do you like about the Northfields Centre?

- We use it for CV's, job searches
- Staff a big part of why we come here
- Building good location for the area. Young people from all areas come around.

Q: What does a youth centre need to provide?

- Break-out space, big space, a kitchen and money for cooking

Q: What improvements could we make?

- Wi-Fi service
- Indoor TV aerial as they keep getting pulled down.
- An earlier session at 4-6pm

Q: What do you think about the idea of sharing your space with other groups?

- Young people need their own space - they want their own time.
- Libraries wouldn't offer big enough spaces

Q: Why is this centre in particular important to you?

- Keep our Youth Centre open.
- We don't use any other buildings in the area

### **Thurnby Lodge Youth Centre, 7 July, Thurs, 7-8pm (Young people)**

Lead: David Thrussell, Head of Youth Services

Attending: 13 youth centre members

### Comments

Q: Why do you use this centre?

- There's nowhere else to go
- 4 attendees also use Armadale Youth Centre
- Young people would like the centre open every evening and are happy to attend other nearby centres on evenings when Thurnby Lodge is not open.
- It is easy enough for some young people to get to both Armadale and Thurnby youth centres. Most travel on foot or by bike, one by bus.
- Those who use both centres say they prefer Thurnby Lodge because the smaller space is somehow more relaxed.
- Ball court is well used during youth centre hours
- Good age range makes the centre more accessible and friendly.
- Youth workers are highly valued – this is a key part of the service

Q: What could be improved about the Centre?

- Open more evenings
- WiFi

## Appendix A - Transforming Neighbourhood Services – North East Area Engagement Report July 2016

- Some investment in equipment – repair pool table and table football
- TV and games machines upgrade/made available
- Better choice of snacks from kitchen

Q: What other community buildings do you and your family use?

- No other buildings used by attendees.
- Library not used – but not local
- Not aware of Ocean Road Community Centre
- Members come from a range of schools

### **Armadale Centre, 11th July, Mon, 6-7pm (working age and senior citizens)**

Lead: Adrian Wills, Head of Neighbourhood Services

Attending: 8 people

Centres used: Netherhall NC; Hamilton Library;

#### **Comments**

##### Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre

- There is potential to move services into one building - either the Armadale Centre or Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre
- In the past groups have temporarily relocated to the Armadale Centre after a fire at the Neighbourhood Centre
- There is potential to transfer the vacated building to a community group under the Community Asset Transfer policy.
- There were questions about how this would work in practice:
- Who would run the building, and would they be a local group?
- Could groups make a joint bid? (answer: yes, so long as they had a legal identity)
- Concerns the room hire rates may be increased if the building is taken on by a community group
- It was noted that groups would have to consider the full costs – for example building rates, energy bills and buildings insurance
- Some people saw an opportunity for local people to get together to take on a community building
- It was noted that some groups relied on staff help to set up the room for their activities.
- Many groups meet in the evening which may clash with youth sessions if sharing the Armadale Centre. Is it possible to reschedule some sessions to make better use of the building during the daytime?
- Car parking and access for less mobile customer are important considerations if groups move to another building.

##### Hamilton Library:

- Feel that the Hamilton estate is lacking in facilities
- Concern that section 106 development money has is coming back to Hamilton
- There is an opportunity to expand community access to Hamilton library, especially with regard to the large hall
- Library needs to be more user friendly for booking community events
- Need to review ease of access to community spaces – the hall and the community garden
- It was noted that there is a growing population in the Hamilton area therefore existing community facilities need to be developed

### **City Hall, Young Peoples Council, 12 July, Tues, 6–7pm (Young people)**

## Appendix A - Transforming Neighbourhood Services – North East Area Engagement Report July 2016

Lead: David Thrussell

Attending: 5

### Comments

- The priorities for youth provision are having a safe place to go and engaging with peers and youth workers
- Youth centres should offer help & advice, ping pong table, pool table & a kitchen and to be safe. I think you should look at schools as an alternative location for youth centres as these are age appropriate and have lots of facilities
- Buildings should offer a big space for activities
- Can we put youth provision in Troon ward where do the young people go? This would be good as this is central to the other wards.
- Merge Netherhall neighbourhood centre with Hamilton Library this would mean better use of facilities and more savings.
- Armadale & Thurnby Lodge Centres have a different atmosphere I think that young people go to TL for support and advice and to Armadale for fun.
- We don't think the youth centres should have wifi as this will result in friends becoming disengaged them from each other and the sessions if they are constantly on their phones
- The idea of sharing space would be good as long as this was age appropriate

### Questions asked:

- Why have the Children Young People & Family centres been rebranded (answer – these building may provide opportunities for young people in future)
- How many buildings will be closed or merged over the city? (answer: no decisions have been made the council needs to make a 30% reductions to make the savings over the whole project)

### Northfields Neighbourhood Centre, 12th July, Tues, 6-7pm

Lead: Adrian Wills, Head of Neighbourhood Services

There were no attendees on the evening. However one group requested another session.

- The centre is used by a few core groups – the bowling group have been attending for many years
- The building was very poorly used a few years ago, but use and income have increased significantly in the last two years, mainly due to wide use by a large new group
- The group deliver a wide programme of community activities open to all including Maths & English study classes for children and a badminton club.
- The centre is ideally placed for group members living in Northfields, Hastings Road and Gypsy Road areas as well as the surrounding wards.
- The open grass land behind the centre is used during some sessions, and is enjoyed by children
- Concerned to ensure that all communities can continue to access the building
- There is interest in a potential Community Asset Transfer

### Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre, 14 July, Thurs, 4:30-5:30pm

Lead: Adrian Wills, Head of Neighbourhood Services

Attending: 4

### Comments:

- There was general concensus that both the library and the neighbourhood centre are very busy buildings and it is not possible to merge these services.
- Belgrave ward is a densely packed area – there is a perception that it is lacking facilities given the number of people living here, and the diverse nature of the communities

## Appendix A - Transforming Neighbourhood Services – North East Area Engagement Report July 2016

- There was a feeling that the Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) must continue as a council run service given its importance to the community.
- The need to save money by reorganising services was understood, but surely the centre pays for itself? (answer: There is a large deficit between the building running costs and the income from room hire. However we are looking for the best fit model as a whole for the area).
- There was concern about the future of the local membership scheme at BNC. It was confirmed there are around 500 members which generated about £2,500 last year. There was a discussion around the link between the membership scheme, use of space and income generated for the building.
- There was concern about the prices of membership as people in the community may not be able to afford new/higher rates.
- Concerned that a lot of people use the Centre, if there is no Centre people will have nothing to do
  - o Crime rates within young kids may rise
  - o Older people use the centre to socialise and stay active. There are hidden costs if people are unable to access these services.
- There was concern about the lunch club as kitchen equipment is ageing and work has had to be undertaken to guard against rodent infestation. It was agreed that the lunch club is a valuable community resource, much loved especially by older people in the community.

### **Suggestions for developing the BNC**

- There is still a high percentage of people in the area who do not speak or read English. It was noted that new communities often arrive with very little English and there is a high demand for English classes and assistance with council and government forms. There are opportunities to bring in learning and customer services as part of the development of the BNC.
- Need more Adult Learning provision at the BNC
- How could the centre be improved? - Have changing facilities for the rest rooms
- Need to promote the Centre to ensure all communities are aware of what is on offer
- Can the Housing office move into the Centre?
- Could Citizens Advice Bureau sessions be delivered here?
- Wi-Fi is needed to assist with adult learning programmes
- More classes on IT basic skills required to support the council's channel shift agenda
- Have certain facilities at this Centre such as help with Visa like they do at the Peepul Centre

### **Suggestions for developing the Library**

- The Library is a community hub offering shared space for social groups. The community can help develop the library working with library staff.
  - o For example the volunteer led Knitting Group started attracts a wide range of people from surrounding areas.

**Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre, 14 July, Thurs 6-7pm**

Lead: Adrian Wills, Head of Neighbourhood Services

Attending: 7

### **Comments:**

- Feel like the Council has already made a decision – reassurance was given that proposals will only be developed after talking with local people
- Feel both Belgrave Library and Neighbourhood Centre are used to the maximum, and are the busiest buildings in the North East area.



## Appendix A - Transforming Neighbourhood Services – North East Area Engagement Report July 2016

- Concerned about moving any more services and people into the Centre.
- Feel strongly that it is not feasible to accommodate the library within the BNC.
- It is vital to keep the services running in the BNC and the Library.
- There was a passionate speech in defense of the library service at Rushey Mead and Belgrave. Access to quality information and books free of charge is vital especially for children and young people, and for older people in this community.
- This is a deprived area and people are not in a position to pay large amounts for services. This must be taken into account when reviewing buildings and services.
- There were strong concerns about the membership scheme. There were worries that if older people were asked to pay more they not be able to afford to access the service.

### **Suggestions for developing Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre**

- Need to review the basis on which the Police use an office in the BNC
- Adrian Wills suggested it may be possible to reorganise room use to make more space available for groups to increase income from room hire. Attendees felt it would be difficult to change anything as there was a feeling that use of the building was already optimised.
- Attendees asked is it possible to review staffing? (answer: a staff review has already taken place. Staff are now able to work flexibly between buildings, for example between the library and the neighbourhood centre).
- Could Adult Learning deliver more sessions at the Centre?
- Access to Wi-Fi is needed
- Car Parking is an issue. Non-centre users are regularly using BNC spaces

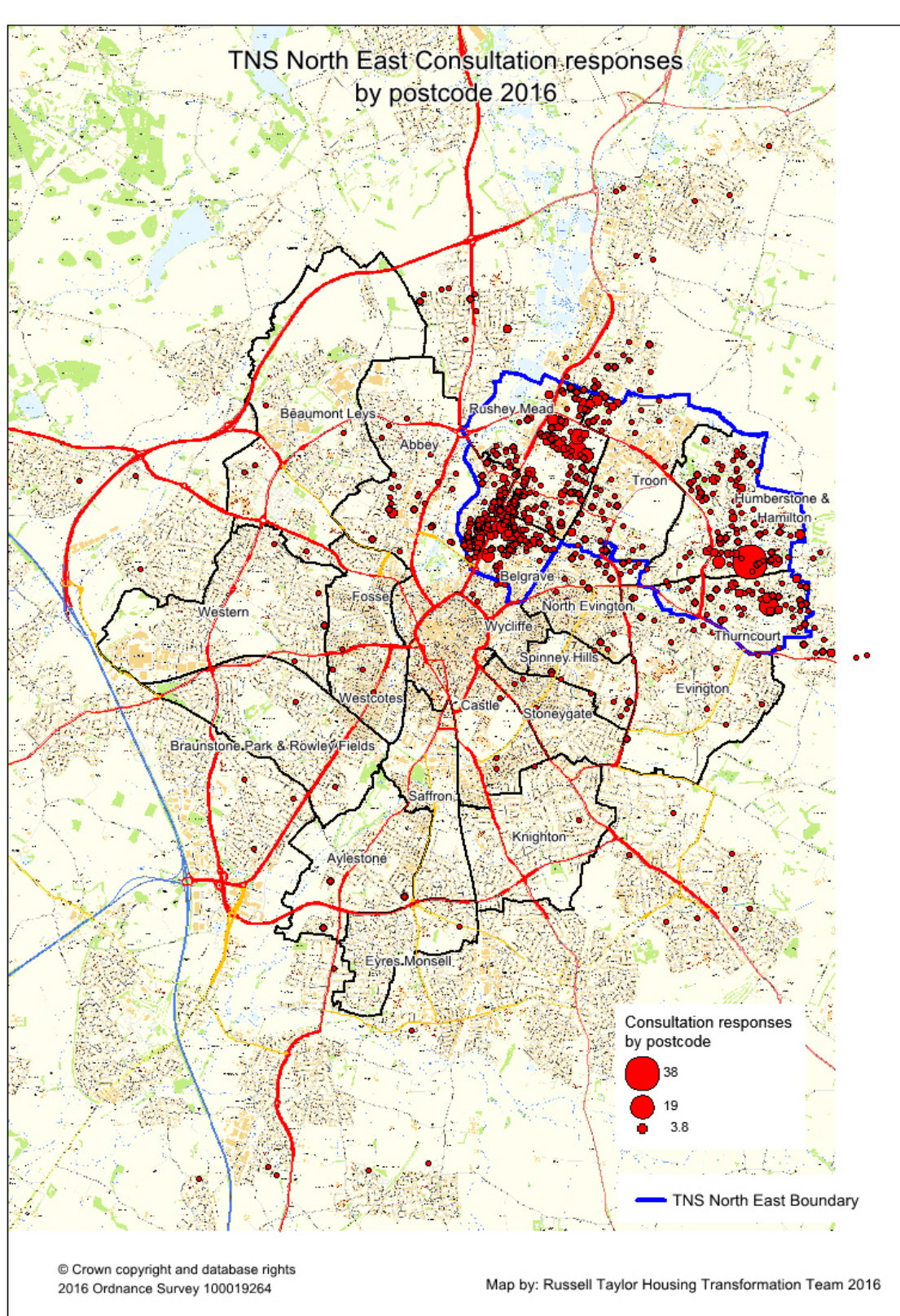
### **Suggestions for Rushey Mead:**

- There was a perception the Recreation Centre is not well used.
- Is there a way to deliver library and community services from on building? This may mean that library opening hours could be increased.

It was suggested that the Rec would be the best building to locate services in, although thought would need to be given parking.

### Written and Online Comments and Responses

In total 1,191 responses were received up until the closing date of the consultation. The following map shows the locations of respondents where a useable postcode was provided (89% of total responses):



Appendix A - Transforming Neighbourhood Services – North East Area Engagement Report July 2016

The following table shows the breakdown of responses by their resident wards:

<b>WARD</b>	<b>COUNT</b>	<b>%</b>
Belgrave	276	28.2
Rushey Mead	247	25.2
Humberstone & Hamilton	171	17.4
Thurncourt	87	8.9
Troon	64	6.5
Abbey	34	3.5
North Evington	31	3.2
Evington	18	1.8
Spinney Hills	11	1.1
Aylestone	7	0.7
Beaumont Leys	6	0.6
Western	5	0.5
Wycliffe	5	0.5
Braunstone Park & Rowley Fields	4	0.4
Stoneygate	4	0.4
Westcotes	3	0.3
Castle	3	0.3
Knighton	2	0.2
Eyres Monsell	1	0.1
Fosse	1	0.1
<b>All valid postcodes within the City</b>	<b>980</b>	

Appendix A - Transforming Neighbourhood Services – North East Area Engagement Report July 2016

93% of total responses received (where a valid postcode was supplied) were from households within the North East TNS Area

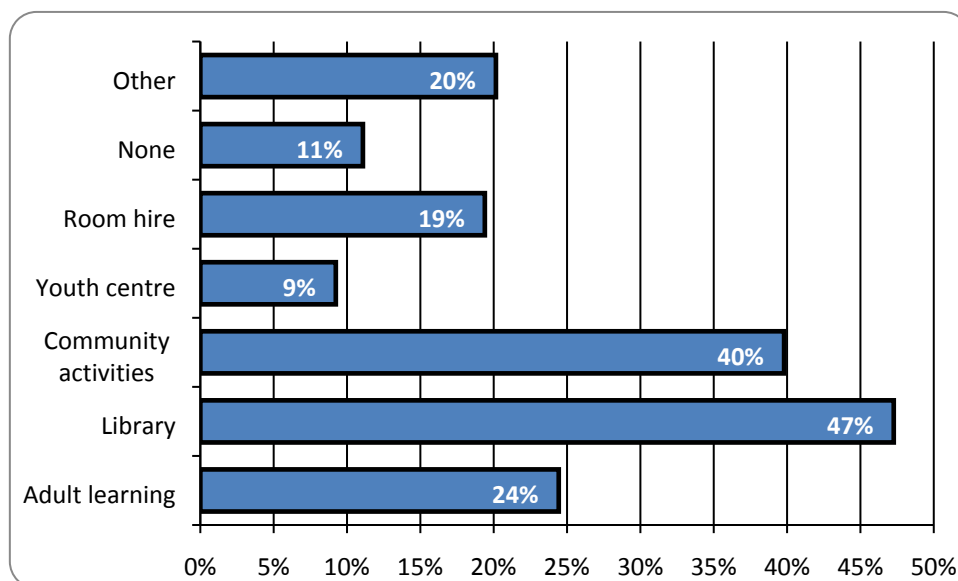
<b>DISTRICT</b>	<b>COUNT</b>
Leicester	980
Charnwood	43
Harborough	15
Blaby	13
Oadby & Wigston	9
Hinckley and Bosworth	1

## Views and comments

This section contains details of how people responded to the consultation questions. A copy of the questionnaire used has been included as Appendix A to this document. Responses to the questions asked are as follows:

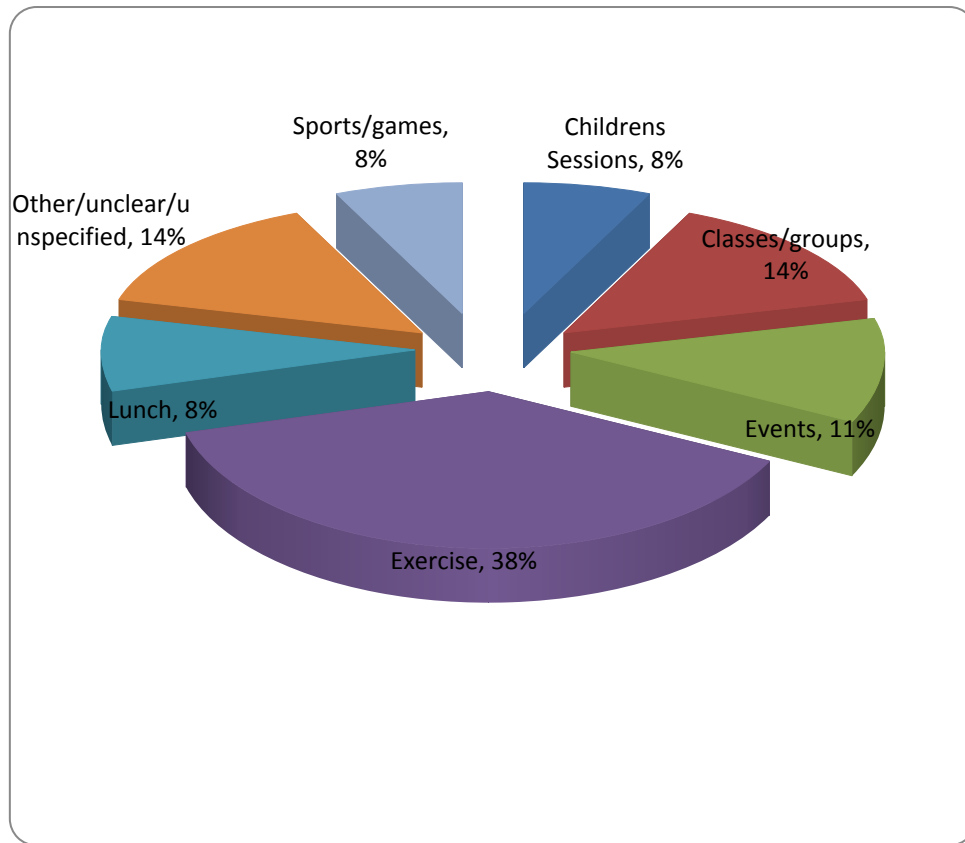
### Q.1. Which neighbourhood services do you use?

A total of 1,191 respondents provided an answer to this question (100% of a total of 1,191 respondents), however, it should be noted that an option was to indicate that no services were used, which 132 (11%) of respondents selected. Respondents were allowed to make multiple choices for this question and the following chart shows the percentage that selected each option:



- The service with the highest use of respondents across the North East area was the library, with 47% of all respondents selecting this option.
- 40% of all respondents used “Community Activities” across the range of centre.
- The third highest use was “Adult Learning” with 24% of respondents accessing this service in the North East area.

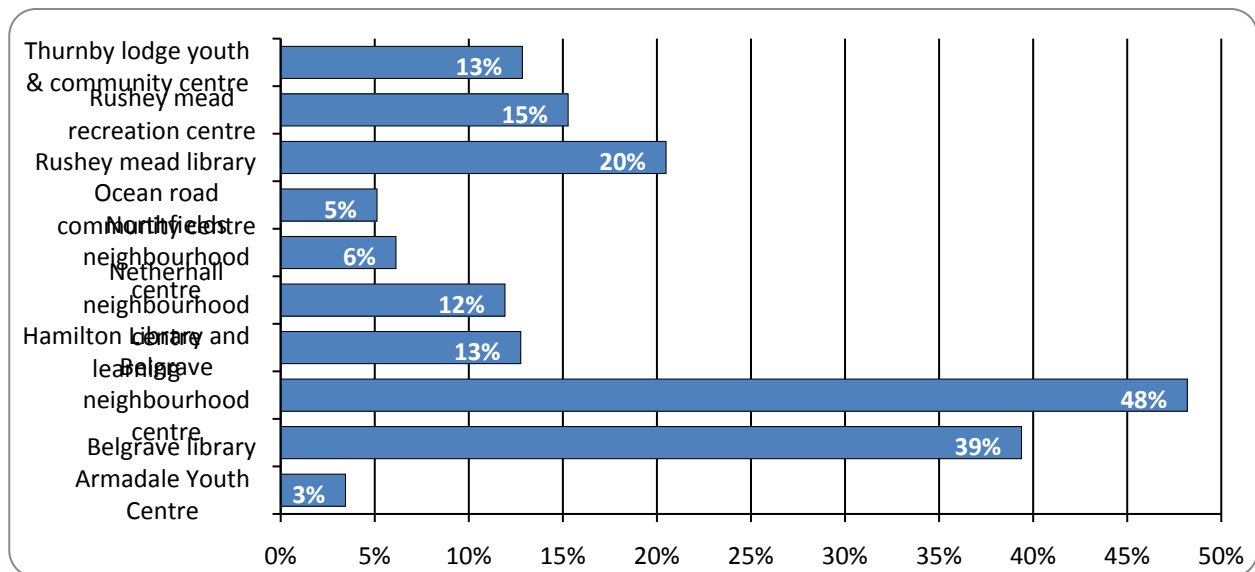
Respondents were given the opportunity to describe any other use they make of Neighbourhood Services in the area. A breakdown of the uses described by the 20% of responses relating to the ‘other’ category is shown in the graph below:



- Within “other” types of use the most popular category was exercise with 38% of those selecting “other” describing an exercise type of activity
- The next most popular category was informal classes or groups with 14% of all those selecting “other” describing this type of use.
- Of those selecting “other” 11% said they used Neighbourhood Services for “Events” such as large cultural events at Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre.
- Other types of use described were lunch clubs, children’s sessions and games.

**Q.2. Which centres do you use?**

A total of 1,144 (96%) of respondents provided an answer to this question and 47 respondents (4%) did not provide an answer to this question. Respondents were allowed to make multiple choices for this question and the following chart shows the percentage that selected each option.



- The highest number of respondents to the engagement questionnaire said they used Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre (48% of all respondents)
- The second highest number of respondents to the engagement questionnaire said they Belgrave Library (39% of all respondents)
- Facilities in Rushey Mead ward were also well represented with 20% of all respondents using Rushey Mead Library and 15% of all respondents using the Recreation Centre.
- Users responding to the engagement were free to select multiple sites. Many respondents said they use multiple buildings, especially where buildings are located close to each other.

**Q.3. Please give reasons why you use these centres (for example: ease of access, friendliness of staff, etc) - Why these centres**

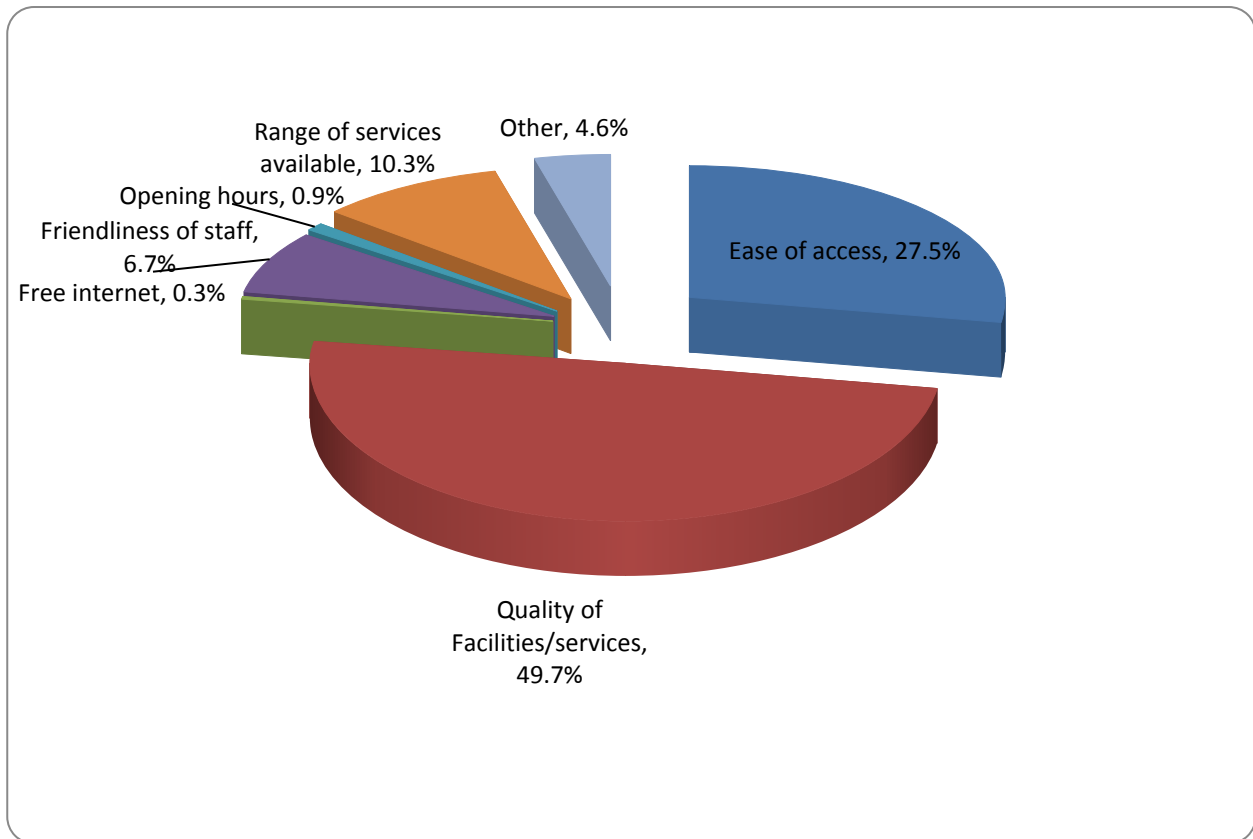
This was a free text response allowing respondents to state the reasons why centres were used. A total of 1,129 (95%) of respondents provided an answer to this question. It has been possible to broadly categorise the majority of these responses in order of importance as follows:

- Facilities/services
- Range of services available
- Ease of access
- Friendliness of staff

Also of importance were:

- Opening hours
- Access to the internet

The following chart shows the percentage of respondents commenting on each of these categories:



- Nearly 50% of respondents said they used Neighbourhood Services buildings because they place high a value on the services delivered in them.
- The second most important category for using the specified buildings which could identified was ease of access for respondents – 27.5% of all respondents.
- The range of services available in the building was the third most important reason for using the specified buildings to respondents – 10.3% of all reasons given, followed by the friendliness of the staff (6.7%)

**Q.4. Do you have any ideas or suggestions about how we could reorganise neighbourhood services to save money? - Your ideas**

A total of 566 (48%) of respondents answered this question. This was an open question and did not put any restrictions on the respondent as to how to answer. A wide range of points were made by respondents including strong support for specific local services and buildings.

Responses to this question can be generally categorised as follows:

Response category	Number of respondents
Suggestions for savings	314
Support for local services / no change	110
Other	88
No comments	679



Suggestions for making savings can be broadly categorised as follows. Many respondents made several different suggestions:

Suggestion category	Number of respondents
Bring services together in fewer buildings	45
Deliver extra services eg adult learning	45
Use buildings more efficiently	43
Increase hire charges and other fees	43
Increase use to generate more income	36
More use of volunteers	34
Invest in buildings to increase use	19
Better promotion of services	16
Reduce staffing	14
Reduce opening hours	12
Transfer buildings to the community	5
Install self-service kiosks	2

A selection of the responses made to question 4 is provided below:

One central hub could be created but only if measures are put in place for the elderly to get there.

Look at timing of use.

Increase funding. Keep service the same

Keep the most used activities, motivate more people to use all available services--hence monies from each head count means economies of scale and ultimately very cost effective/cheaper to run.

I think there is a great needs of expansion to the neighbourhood facility an area in belgrave is heavily populated and services and not large enough to cater and becomes at time over-crowded. Provide more large facility of additional services to cope with demand.

Put all services under 1 roof including CAB citizens advice bureau. BNC

Open for a few hours less each day, turn off electric and lights when not in use. Set things on set days, replan areas to coincide with others so each day still maintains the communities needs. (Northfields Youth Centre)

Free Wifi (BNC)

Safe and larger car park with CCTV  
 Bright funky paint to make a lively environment  
 Professional staff with good quality helper  
 Early opening time 8am. (BNC)

You could put up charges a bit higher. I am sure everybody can afford to use the service.

Reduce the library opening hours, this could help save the money

"Just keep them open.

Advertise services and information (Whats on/ how to get there) in different languages and usage will increase no need to change services."

Introduce charge for each event that takes place. I.e rooms taken up by community for playing card. So cannot be booked for fee paying customers at BNC. Rooms are left open even when not in use so anyone can walk in without paying. (BNC)

Keeping this open will reduce mental & physical problems as without them I will become isolated. (BNC)

This centre and it's activities prevent other long term drain on neighbourhood services such as NHS, mental health, Police service. Use of centre prevents long term costly illnesses such as depression, mental health as well as good physical health and well being. This centre needs to be maintained as it is, with the same level of charges as present.

We can get volunteers to do the admin & clerical work. Libraries can be kept open with the help of community volunteers.

Maybe close down smaller libraries in and around the Belgrave area - for eg. Rushey Mead library and bring everything under the Belgrave Cossington Library which is a big one.

There are many rooms in the neighbourhood centre, if all the rooms are rented out, the income from this would help to run the centre. Even after that, if you still think it is necessary, you can increase the rent. If the centre is accessible, it will help all the users and everybody will be happy. (BNC)

There is a centre at Rushey mead. That should be combined with Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre.

Turn off the heating in summer (Northfields)

Lower the age group for people to come in and stay out of trouble. (Northfields youth Centre)

Intergrate same events etc with schools encourage schools to have their facilities open to communities. (i.e Room/Halls) (Rushey Mead)

One suggestion could be to widen the age group of people who can attend this centre. (Northfields)

Look at usage by room of the BNC to see if this really well used and key facility could be used slightly better. Example if there is a group of twenty using a room which could take fifty, just swap around so that the larger room could be used/freed up to accommodate another group. Both the

Library and BNC are important to our community.

Merge Netherhall Neighbourhood with Hamilton Library  
Keep Armadale / Remain Thurnby Lodge Centre  
Ocean Road merge with Thurnby lodge centre

merging 2 centres that are close - used for same purpose... Example Belgrave Library and Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre

Put in LED lighting (BNC)

Our centre is the core of the estate, very busy centre, in use every day through various activities that are available here. To lose this would be devastating to the community. A possible merger with another centre might help depending on the table of activities. (Thurnby Lodge)

Have longer opening hours for centralised centres  
Introducing volunteering

Cutting down on number of buildings in use. All the users of above mentioned centres can easily be accommodated by half of the buildings

use of one building for the ward but must make it easy to travel too (Hamilton)

join neighbourhood centres with libraries Belgrave/Rushey Mead/Netherhall  
Ocean Rd & Thurnby Lodge? although further apart

From my experience, it is very hard to access to the centre. I mean, public are not sure, who to call, or contact to use the centre. (Northfields)

From the map I can see it makes sense to have just one centre, especially as facilities are close together. There only needs to be one in each ward. But I wouldn't want to see less library provision. Could you use the nearby schools - both are more modern. (Rushey Mead)

Open longer hours and close on other days  
Charge small fee to use the computers (Hamilton)

More activities for the young adult/teenagers. More access for the elderly. Variety of groups. Hire out space for events etc.

### **Submissions**

Some groups made submissions during the course of the engagement period through a range of channels.

These included:

- A written request to retain the Rushey Mead Recreation Centre under Council control for community use. The request was signed by 71 centre users from the Mens and Ladies Milap Groups. The key points raised are:

## Appendix A - Transforming Neighbourhood Services – North East Area Engagement Report July 2016

- The centre has good use by local residents
  - The centre benefits from a good level of income derived from the regular groups – 9 of which are listed.
  - Many centre users have been coming since 1980 when the Men's Milap group started up.
  - Centre users value the social activities as they help with mental and physical wellbeing
  - Centre users are not aware of any other buildings in the area where they would be able to gather for activities
  - The signatories request that the centre remain open and under council control.
- 
- A proposal from a local organisation to develop Belgrave Library for alternative community use by creating a health and well- being community hub

## **CONCLUSIONS**

This engagement is to be used to help construct draft proposals for the transformation of services in the North East area of the city.

The method of engagement of holding drop-in sessions to promote awareness of TNS and focus groups to generate ideas has been well received by both members of the community. This has proved a successful method of seeking points of view and suggestions for change to be taken into account. The promotion of paper and online questionnaires has proved particularly successful, generating the highest response rate in the TNS process to date. The key messages to be taken forward from this engagement period are:

### **Factors to consider for buildings used:**

- Good facilities and / or good accessible book stock
- Ease of access, including longer opening hours
- Range of activities available under one roof
- Friendliness of staff
- Convenience of location, bus routes and local proximity
- For young people especially, a safe place where young people feel they belong

### **Suggestions for saving money:**

- Bring services together in fewer buildings
- Run buildings more efficiently, for example by reviewing heating and lighting, and by reviewing allocation of rooms for hire to increase income
- Increase hire charges and other fees to increase overall income
- Increase usage through investment and promotion to generate more income
- More use of volunteers

### **Suggestions for future use:**

- The majority of people were supportive of the buildings they currently use and there is overall strong support for libraries, community and youth centres
- Consider amalgamating services in areas where buildings are in close proximity.
- Bring more services into buildings retained under Council Control

### **Lessons Learned**

- The focus groups have been very positive and have proven to be a good method of engagement with members of the public
- There has been a good response rate to the engagement process with 1,191 completed forms and good attendance at the focus group meetings
- The overall approach of involving stakeholders and members of the public early has proven beneficial as not only does it help to ensure that all concerns are heard, it also provides sufficient time to respond to these concerns on an evidenced basis

- The process undertaken has enjoyed good co-operation between stakeholder individuals and groups, as well as other services
- A similar model of engagement will be used for the other areas of the city

4. Do you have any ideas or suggestions about how we could reorganise neighbourhood services to save money?

5. What is your post code? .....

Please hand this form in to any Leicester City Council library, community, youth or leisure centre, or post to:  
Transforming Neighbourhood Services, Room 2.23 Town Hall, Town Hall Square, Leicester LE1 9BG

The closing date is 17 July 2016.

[leicester.gov.uk/tns](http://leicester.gov.uk/tns)



## Neighbourhood buildings: North east area



1. Rushey Mead Library
2. Rushey Mead Recreation Centre
3. Belgrave Library
4. Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre
5. Northfields Neighbourhood Centre (including Youth Centre)
6. Hamilton Library & Learning Centre
7. Armadale Youth Centre
8. Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre
9. Ocean Road Community Centre
10. Thumby Lodge Youth and Community Centre

This map shows approximate locations for illustrative purposes

Produced by Leicester City Council, communications and marketing team, 06.16

## Changing neighbourhood services in your area

North east area:  
Belgrave, Humberstone & Hamilton, Rushey Mead, Thurncourt and Troon



Your local services are going to change.

[leicester.gov.uk/tns](http://leicester.gov.uk/tns)



### Why are services changing?

- Significant cuts in government funding mean we cannot continue to run services as we do now.
- We want to work with communities to make changes now, before it becomes critical.
- We are reviewing how neighbourhood services are run to make sure that they are affordable and can respond to local people's needs.
- Leicester City Council is committed to providing high quality neighbourhood services.

### How do we make changes?

We will be working with local people and community organisations to look at the best way to deliver services in future.

### Options

- Reducing the number of buildings we operate from
- Merging services into shared buildings: this has led to investment in modern facilities, better access and longer opening hours
- Involving local people and groups in running some services
- Self-service facilities

See the back of this leaflet for a map showing the area and buildings we are talking about.

### How you can get involved

We are inviting the local community to find out more about this programme and make suggestions for the north east area by 17 July 2016.

1. Give your views online: [leicester.gov.uk/tns](http://leicester.gov.uk/tns)  
or
2. Fill out the form in this leaflet.
3. Come to a drop in session or join a focus group. Ask staff in your local centre for details.

### What happens next?

We will consider all the ideas that people put forward and then hold a public meeting to feed back with proposals for change in the area. This will form part of a full public consultation in 2016.

If you have any questions please email [tns@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:tns@leicester.gov.uk)



### Your views

1. Which neighbourhood services do you use? (please tick)

- Adult learning    Library    Room hire    None  
 Community activities (such as cooking, crafts, dance)  
 Youth centre    Other (please specify) .....

2. Which centres do you use? (please tick)

- Rushey Mead Recreation Centre    Rushey Mead Library  
 Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre    Belgrave Library  
 Northfields Neighbourhood Centre (inc. Youth Centre)  
 Hamilton Library and Learning Centre  
 Armadale Youth Centre    Ocean Road Community Centre  
 Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre  
 Thurnby Lodge Youth and Community Centre

3. Why do you use these centres? (for example: ease of access, friendliness of staff and so on)

Please turn over







## **Appendix B**

# **Transforming Neighbourhood Services**

## **North East Area Consultation**

**Findings of the public consultation**

**As at 24<sup>th</sup> October 2016**

*Prepared by:*

- *Neighbourhood Services*
- *with the support of Transformation & Service Improvement Team*

*This report provides a summary of the findings of public consultation.*

*It includes information about:*

- The issues and options under consideration;*
- The consultation method;*
- The public response and views expressed;*
- The proposals made in light of what was learnt.*

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report summarises the outcomes of the public consultation on draft proposals for the reorganisation and consolidation of building stock in the North East area of the city, being managed as part of the Transforming Neighbourhood Services (TNS) Programme.

A copy of the consultation form used for the exercise is included at the end of this document.

This period of consultation is part of a longer period of such activity as follows:

- An initial engagement exercise was carried out between April and July 2013 to raise awareness of the TNS project and gain an overview of the general views and attitudes of residents towards neighbourhood services
- Focussed engagement with ward councillors, local MP, residents, service users, partners and stakeholders in the North East area of the city between June and July 2016 to help develop draft proposals for the transformation of the area
- Analysis of the data collected and the responses received through the engagement exercises to construct a draft model, which was presented to the City Mayor and Executive in August 2016.
- Assessments of equalities impact which will be further developed following consultation in order to inform the final decision
- Consultation on the draft model during September and October 2016, involving a series of meetings with resident groups, stakeholder groups and community groups and the availability of a form to complete to provide feedback, comment and suggestions against the draft proposals (**subject of this report**)

The consultation period ran from Monday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2016 until Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2016 and was carried out in two main parts:

- A series of meetings, by arrangement and request with resident groups, community groups and voluntary organisations who use the facilities being investigated by the review
- A form available in various locations across the area and online for people to provide individual responses and comments

In addition some groups made separate submissions which were not part of the questionnaire.

A petition concerning the proposals for the Belgrave area was also submitted and is referenced as part of this report.

In general the responses and comments received were all supportive of the buildings that each individual used. However there was a general acknowledgement that the services provided are more important to people than the buildings from which they are currently provided. There was a high level of engagement with the consultation and also in finding the best solutions for delivering services by using building better.

A total of 18 meetings were held upon request, covering a variety of community groups, open meetings, ward community meetings, and user groups. Approximately 720 people attended the meetings throughout the period. The main messages drawn from the meetings held with groups are that:

- Libraries and the functions they perform are highly valued as community hubs. In particular local residents value access to online information and services, promotion of reading for learning and leisure and support for children and young people's educational needs.
- There was significant support for the activities in community centres which are important for local areas
- There was good support for youth sessions from youth centre users. The key building consideration was the provision of a safe space which the young people felt was theirs. There was interest in working together with officers to find alternative solutions where potential building changes would impact upon youth sessions.
- In general there was agreement between groups that the services provided were more important than particular buildings. However in the Belgrave area many service users were keen to see both the library and the Neighbourhood Centre buildings retained.
- There was concern at the busiest sites about the feasibility of amalgamating services into fewer buildings.
- There was concern about proposals to reorganise lunch club provision at Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre in order to make better use of the building.
- There was general agreement with all groups that savings can be achieved by reorganising services to make better use of buildings
- There is some support for transferring of assets through the Community Asset Transfer procedure for less well used buildings, but also some concern that the community and existing users would continue to be able to use the buildings post transfer.
- There was enthusiasm amongst some groups to work with the council to find solutions, in particular at Rushey Mead with regard to potential asset transfer should the Recreation Centre be offered and at Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre with regard to raising income through room hire.

Between 12th September and 23<sup>rd</sup> October a questionnaire containing details of the proposals and a 'tear-off' response form was also used to gather opinions on the proposals. These were widely distributed in the area, and a total of 5,000 leaflets were circulated. At the closure of the consultation on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2016, a total of 1,436 completed form responses were received. People were asked to identify which services and centres they used, what benefits they would receive from the proposals and any reasons why the proposals would disadvantage them. The main points drawn from the responses were:

- There is good support for the services and activities offered by community centres
- There is a high level of support for library services
- A large number of responses were received from Belgrave and Rushey Mead wards regarding the proposals for buildings in this area.
- Many respondents are concerned about the proposal to relocate Belgrave Library to Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre. Key concerns were around the availability of sufficient space and the impact on existing services and activities.
- Respondents are concerned to ensure that existing activities and services can continue under the building changes proposed. This was the case for the lunch club and exercise classes operating at Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre.
- There is strong support for the Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre and for the pre-

school which operates there.

- There is good support for the proposal to improve access to the community hall at Hamilton Library

In addition many service users responded to highlight the value of local services to their communities to suggest certain buildings be retained under council control.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Transforming Neighbourhood Services – North East Area**

The TNS programme aims to identify different ways of organising how services are delivered within the neighbourhoods of the city of Leicester, with a view to reducing the costs of delivery by around 30% while maintaining the quality of our services.

The programme has identified an approach through which the city is divided into 6 geographical areas and these are explored in turn to identify ways to transform services through opportunities to co-locate services and make better use of the assets available.

The scope of the programme covers public facing service areas. The services scoped into the North East area are:

- Neighbourhood Services - Community Services and Libraries
- Adult Skills & Learning
- Customer Services
- Youth Centres

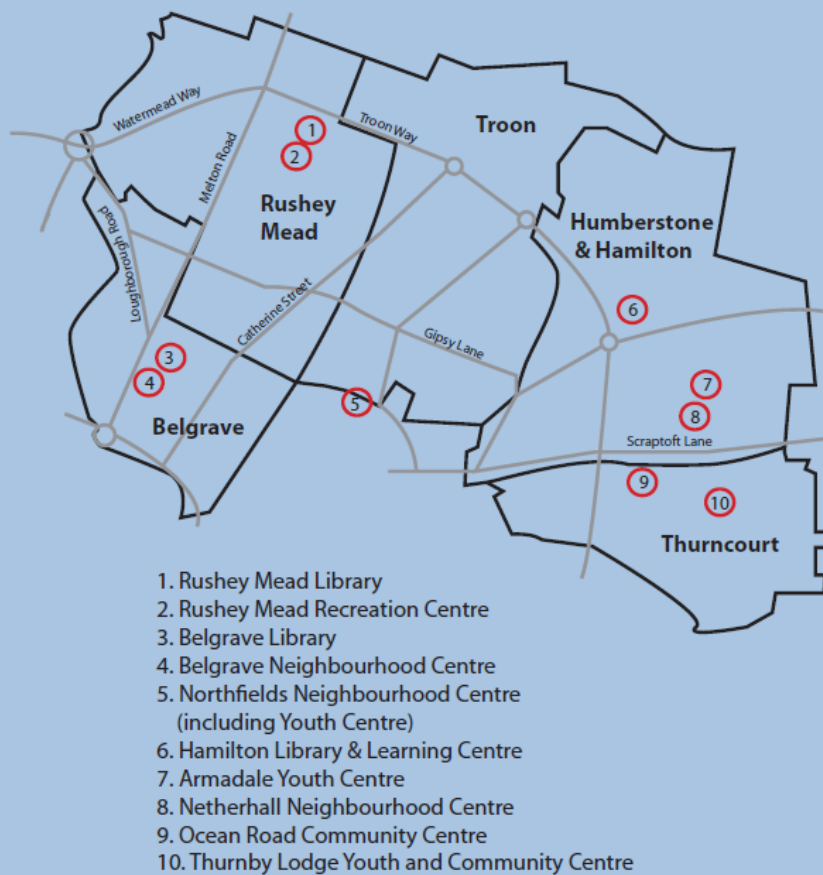
The buildings within the scope of the North East are:

- Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre
- Belgrave Library
- Armadale Centre
- Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre
- Hamilton Library & Learning Centre
- Northfields Neighbourhood Centre
- Rushey Mead Library
- Rushey Mead Recreation Centre
- Ocean Road Community Centre
- Thurnby Lodge Youth & Community Centre

The following map shows the wards covered by the north east neighbourhood and the community buildings which were included in the review. The wards included are: Belgrave, Rushey Mead, Troon, Humberstone & Hamilton and Thurncourt.



## Neighbourhood buildings: North east area



This map shows approximate locations for illustrative purposes

## **CONSULTATION METHOD**

### **Objectives and techniques**

The public consultation period for the North East area ran from 12<sup>th</sup> September 2016 until 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2016. The aims of the consultation were to promote awareness of the TNS programme in the local area, to identify and engage stakeholders, to gather information on how neighbourhood services and buildings are currently used in the area and to collect any comments on the draft proposals made and any other suggestions for change.

This consultation builds upon previous development and engagement work undertaken for the TNS programme as a whole with the goal to develop a model for the North East area of the city. Overall, the following activities have taken place:

- Data collection exercise to identify the buildings in scope, costs associated, services provided (both internally and commissioned through voluntary sector organisations), usage statistics, historical information
- An initial city-wide engagement exercise was carried out between April and July 2013 to raise awareness and gain an overview of the general views and attitudes of residents towards neighbourhood services
- A more in-depth and focussed engagement process was carried out between 6<sup>th</sup> June and 17<sup>th</sup> July 2016 to collect suggestions and comments from service users and residents
- Exploratory work into how buildings from other service areas not in the core scope i.e. Children's Centres, schools etc. could be utilised
- Analysis of the data collected and the responses received through the engagement exercises to construct a draft model, which was presented to the City Mayor and Executive in August 2016.
- Assessments of equalities impact which will be further developed during July of engagement in order to inform the final decision
- Consultation on the draft model during September and October 2016, involving a series of meetings with resident groups, stakeholder groups and community group and the availability of a form to complete to provide feedback, comment and suggestions against the draft proposals (**Subject of this report**)

The next steps are:

- Analysis of the data collected and the responses received through the engagement exercises to construct a set of proposals, which will be presented to the City Mayor and Executive for approval.
- Subject to this approval, commencement of implementation projects to effect the changes.

### **Summary of citywide engagement, April – July 2013**

Details of the previous engagements between April – July 2013 have been previously reported.

The main outcomes of these previous exercises were:

- Good support for the principle of prioritising services over buildings
- Strong support for the co-location of services, providing busy places from which multiple services can be accessed

### **Summary of north east area engagement, 6 June – 17 July 2016**

During 6 June – 17 July 2016, 5 drop in sessions and 9 focus groups were held focusing on services and buildings in the North East area of Leicester. Questionnaires were made widely available at community buildings in the area and also online. A total of 1,191 questionnaires were completed, mostly on paper, but some online.

A separate report published in September 2016 is available outlining detailed analysis of the engagement period.

The report summarises the main outcomes of the initial engagement work as follows:

The main reasons given for using services were:

- Facilities/services (half of all responses)
- Range of services available (quarter of all responses)
- Ease of access
- Friendliness of staff

Stakeholders, Residents and service users were also asked for their suggestions for reorganising services in the area to make savings. The main suggestions drawn from the responses were:

- Bring services together in fewer buildings
- Deliver extra services in existing buildings to increase use, for example Adult Learning sessions
- Make changes to run buildings more efficiently, for example install energy saving lighting, review heating and room allocation
- Better promotion to increase the use of existing buildings

In addition many service users responded to highlight the value of local services to their communities to suggest certain buildings be retained under council control.

### **Summary of North East area Consultation, 12 September – 23 October 2016**

This period of consultation has been carried out in two main parts as follows:

- A series of meetings with residents, service users and stakeholders. Two large consultation events were held at Hamilton Library and Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre respectively. The events were chaired by the Assistant Mayor for Neighbourhoods and attended by senior officers with a remit for the services in question. The events were open to everybody and were very well attended. In addition a series of consultation meetings with officers were arranged for interested community groups upon request. Focus groups were held at all three youth centres and a resident led focus group was arranged for stakeholders in the Belgrave area following expressions of interest at the consultation evening.
- A questionnaire was made available in paper format at community buildings across the north east area and online for people to provide individual responses and comments.

Additional responses have also been included in this report:

- Some groups made separate submissions which were not part of the questionnaire.
- A petition was circulated online and on paper.

The details of the meetings held are as follows:

Organisation/Person	Venue	Time/Date
The Mens/Ladies Exercise Groups	Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre	Monday 26/09/16
Open Meeting	Hamilton Library	Monday 26/09/16
Open Meeting	Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre	Tuesday 27/09/16
Rushey Mead ward meeting	Rushey Mead Recreation Centre	Tuesday 4/10/16
Pukaar group	Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre	Friday 07/10/16
Ward Cllr Tour of Netherhall buildings	Netherhall NC & Armadale	Friday 07/10/16
Bethel Pneuma Tabernacle Church	Town Hall	Friday 07/10/2016
Northfields Youth Centre users	Northfields Youth Centre	Monday 12/10/2016
Armadale Youth Centre users	Armadale Youth Centre	Monday 12/10/2016
Thurnby Lodge Youth Centre users	Thurnby Lodge Youth and Community Centre	Tuesday 13/10/2016
Bright Bees Nursery	Telephone meeting	Wednesday 14/10/2016
Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre Lunch Club	Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre	Friday 14/10/2016
Belgrave Focus Group (resident led)	Town Hall	Tuesday 18/10/2016
Islah Trust	Town Hall	Tuesday 18/10/2016
Asian Towers Lunch Club	Town Hall	Tuesday 25/10/2016
Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre Lunch Club	Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre	Friday 14/10/2016
Rushey Mead Recreation Centre users	Rushey Mead Recreation Centre and Armadale Youth Centre	Monday 24/10/2016
Thurnby Lodge Management Committee	Thurnby Lodge Youth and Community Centre	Tuesday 25/10/2016

A questionnaire containing details of the engagement and a ‘tear-off’ response form was used to gather opinions on the proposals. A total of 5,000 paper questionnaires were widely distributed in the area from 12<sup>th</sup> September 2016 to 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2016. The questionnaire was also made available on the Council’s open consultation website. Translations of the text were made available in Gujarati, Punjabi and Urdu.

## **PUBLIC RESPONSE AND VIEWS EXPRESSED**

### **Consultation meetings**

A series of consultation meetings were held attended by residents, service users, community organisations and stakeholders in the North East area of the city. The meetings included two open consultation events held at Hamilton Library and Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre and chaired by the Assistant Mayor for Neighbourhoods.

In addition focus groups were held with young people at each of the three youth centres. A resident led focus group was also arranged for stakeholders in the Belgrave area who had expressed an interest at the consultation evening.

Meetings with individual groups were arranged upon request.

A total of 18 meetings were held during the period, with wide attendance from a range of residents, stakeholders, partners and service users. The Assistant Mayor for Neighbourhoods, ward councillors and Keith Vaz MP attended to support a number of the meetings. Officers for a range of services were available to facilitate and record the meetings.

An estimated total of 728 people attended the focus group meetings.

### **General Queries and Views arising from meetings**

- People attending the groups were protective of the sites that they currently use, but there was a general acceptance that locality based services are more important than particular buildings
- There were concerns about the busy-ness and capacity of some buildings proposed for amalgamation
- There was concern about the impact of co-location of services on existing user groups
- There was concern about the quality of the services proposed for reorganisation under the proposals, and in particular regarding the library service, community events and the lunch club in Belgrave.
- Concerns were raised about the costs of using buildings increasing, particularly if they are transferred to other organisations.
- Enquiries and discussions were held around the potential for asset transfer of buildings.

### **26 September: Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre Mens & Ladies Exercise Groups Number of attendees – 160 People**

Interpretation services present

A briefing was given outlining the draft proposals for the Belgrave area. Service users were asked for their thoughts about moving Belgrave Library into Belgrave Neighbourhood centre. There was a strong consensus of opinion against this idea. One service user asked for a show of hands for and against the idea. All present opposed the idea.

Some of the comments that were given:-

- Belgrave Neighbourhood centre isn't quiet enough for library use
- the building is already too busy with the services currently running there

- there isn't enough room to accommodate the Belgrave Library service
- what would happen to the services currently running in Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre if Belgrave Library moves into the main hall? The key concern for this group is the future of the exercise groups which require the large hall space to operate
- if the exercise groups were reduced or discontinued this would then affect users' mental and physical health
- users stated they want to keep Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre the way it is now
- moving the Belgrave Library into Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre would cause Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre to be overcrowded

Users highlighted the important health benefits of the exercise classes and the wider programme of activities at Belgrave. The classes are regarded as crucial for mental, physical and social wellbeing.

People thought that bringing in adult learning classes was a good idea, but noted there are already some classes for adults available at the Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre.

Users thought that the proposal to invest in the building was good, but some commented that it needed to be knocked down and rebuilt; this is because the building is very old.

Another service user suggested selling both Belgrave Library and Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre to fund a purpose built joint service centre located near the park and housing both the library and community centre.

Many service users have an emotional attachment to the building as they have been using it for 30 – 40 years.

Service users were happy regarding plans to review room hire so long as groups or services that are currently happening in the centre could continue. It was thought that existing users would be able to pay more.

The key issue for the exercise groups is that the current capacity is not sufficient.

Although the groups run 3 times a week they are so well attended that members can only come to one session.

## **26 September: Consultation event, Hamilton Library**

### **Number of attendees – 100 People**

**Panel:** Cllr Kirk Master, Asst Mayor for Neighbourhoods (Chair); Adrian Wills, Head of Neighbourhood Services; John Leach, Director Neighbourhoods & Enforcement; Cllr Vi Dempster, Keith Vaz MP

Adrian Wills explained the background to the TNS programme and outlined the proposals for the north east area. Clarification was requested and given on the council's community asset transfer policy.

Cllr Master asked for service user's comments and suggestions. Key points were as follows:

- Officers say that the proposals are "our" proposals but they're not our proposals. People didn't want the libraries to close nor did they want any cuts to happen.
- A Rushey Mead resident commented "Closing buildings will cause the services to be cut. You said that services won't be cut but due to moving libraries into community centres but this would happen because there isn't enough room for everything"
- If self-service was introduced into libraries then this wouldn't work, as we need the staff to help us find books, engage with the users and to help manage the building, keeping it clean, safe and accessible for all.

- A member of the Hamilton Resident's Association mentioned that Hamilton Library Centre main hall is well used. Could the community take this building on, and what skills would an organisation need to run the building successfully? Adrian Wills explained that where buildings are offered for Community Asset Transfer the council offers independent support working together with an organisation called Locality. Kerry Gray (Head of Adult Learning) also offered help in supporting organisations to gain the skills that they need. Reassurance was given that the current proposal was for the council to continue to run the library centre.
- MP Keith Vaz commented that residents pay for Council services and the Council has a responsibility to provide the services that the public want. Mr Vaz stated it was important that the right buildings were retained for community use.
- Many people suggested retaining Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre under Council control and closing the Armadale Centre because it is better suited to community use and could accommodate youth sessions. There was a consensus amongst those attending that Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre was the preferred building.
- Some community groups use the centres to worship. If these buildings were closed they would need to find somewhere else to worship. A group using Thurnby Lodge Community Centre requested reassurance that they would not be displaced as a result of the proposals.
- Some service users suggested that Rushey Mead Library should have an extension; the library should not be combined with Rushey Mead Recreation Centre.
- It was suggested that some buildings that are not being occupied after 4pm be brought into use for the community to increase capacity in the area.
- Hamilton area doesn't offer many activities for Senior Citizens – it was suggested the council do more for in the area for this group.
- More information was requested regarding the lunch club at Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre. Would the proposed changes to the kitchen mean the lunch club is could be taken out of the Centre and relocated to another facility?
- Hamilton Residents Association welcomed the proposal to make the hall at Hamilton Library easier for the community to use. However it was felt the building isn't big enough; and the hall should ideally be extended into the garden. They also mentioned that the senior citizens struggle to get to other buildings and need transport. Cllr Vi Dempster advised that transportation could be organised through the ward funding bids.
- It is difficult to hire large halls in schools – could the council work with schools to open up these spaces and ensure they are affordable for community hire? Cllr Master suggested to that service users contact the schools governors to speak to them about the prices and room hire.
- It was suggested ongoing building maintenance costs should be taken into account when making decisions for the area.
- Parents using the nursery at Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre were concerned that it could close under the proposals. There was good support for the nursery and concern that there is limited alternative provision in the immediate area.

- There was concern Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre has been neglected and that the wrong centres were proposed for closure. The Netherhall dance group were concerned that the Armadale centre would not be suitable for them.
- Several service users were concerned that Ocean Road Community Centre is run down. If the centre is closed can the groups all be accommodated at Thurnby Lodge Community Centre which is very busy? Adrian Wills confirmed that officers would work with all groups to find the best solutions.
- It was stated that Thurnby Lodge Community Centre was also in need of refurbishment.

Cllr Master thanked members of the public for attending and advised interested groups to make individual appointments with council officers to discuss ideas or concerns.

### **27 September: Consultation event, Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre**

#### **Number of attendees – 200 People**

**Panel:** Cllr Kirk Master, Asst Mayor for Neighbourhoods (Chair); Adrian Wills, Head of Neighbourhood Services; John Leach, Director Neighbourhoods

An interpreter was present.

Before the meeting took place Children's author Alan Gibbons made an unplanned statement to the hall:

"People think libraries are important to people's education, health and wellbeing, they are right! Merging the libraries into the community centres would reduce the library service, this is not right! There will be fewer books, less room to relax and read. We need experienced librarians to operate the libraries. We should not let them close our libraries! Belgrave is the second most popular library in this city"

The meeting was lively, with widespread opposition to the proposal to move Belgrave Library into Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre. The key points raised were:

- Service users wanted to receive the notes from the earlier focus group meetings held in July
- Some service users didn't understand what was meant by library and customer service self-service terminals. Adrian Wills explained that these facilities would be offered in addition to the regular staff. There was no implication that communities would have to run the building for themselves.
- Service users want Belgrave Library to remain where it is. Reasons given included:
- Children need the library to help with their learning. The council should retain the full library service in its present location especially there if there could be cut backs in other Children's Services.
- There isn't enough room to run the library and the Neighbourhood Centre in one building.
- Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre is too noisy for library users.
- The number of books should not be reduced as books are crucial to learning to read and obtaining verified information which the internet cannot guarantee.
- People use the books at Belgrave Library to learn English. This is important to people who move to this country without knowing how to speak English.



- Cllr Master stated that the proposals were to reduce buildings, not services. Residents asked how the same library service could be delivered from Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre as other activities needed to be accommodated.
- If the library moved into the main hall it would not be possible to host larger events at the centre. Could the centre still be used as a polling station?
- Parking at Belgrave neighbourhood Centre is already problematic. How could library users travelling by car also be accommodated? “Would you build a bigger car park?”
- Both Belgrave Library and Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre are community hubs where old and young meet up with their peers. There were concerns this would not be possible due to capacity in the building.
- Tim Foster, Head Teacher at Abbey Primary School spoke on behalf of his students: “Belgrave library needs to stay as it is. People value the library – they don’t have the money to stock up on books. The year 6 students go to the library every Friday to develop their skills and knowledge and to improve on their studies. Moving the library into the Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre would stop these visits because there wouldn’t be enough room.”
- Service users asked where in the Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre the library would go? The centre is used efficiently and there isn’t enough room to move the library into the building.
- Belgrave Lunch club users had concerns about not cooking on site. What would happen to the kitchen staff and who would be cooking the food and how would the food be delivered?
- A young person stated the library was used by school children because it was quiet, but moving it into the Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre would cause disruption when young children are trying to study.
- Councillor Sood suggested to that there were other ways of increasing income, for example by refurbishing some of the rooms at BNC to create more capacity to increase income.
- Residents suggested that both buildings could continue to be run by increasing income. For example room hire charges could be increased at Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre, or snacks sold at Belgrave Library
- Councillor Rita Patel said a few words to the service users. She mentioned that the community and the council needed to work together to come up with sustainable solutions. It was important to find solutions now as reductions in funding were inevitable.
- A number of residents requested a focus group be held to work on ideas for the two buildings.

Cllr Master thanked members of the public for attending and advised interested groups to make individual appointments with council officers to discuss ideas or concerns.

#### **4 October: Rushey Mead Ward Meeting**

**Number of attendees – 40 People**

**Panel:** Cllr Piara Singh Clair; Cllr Rita Patel; Cllr Ross Willmott;

Extract from Action Log – Item 4: TNS consultation

Lee Warner, Senior Project Manager, Neighbourhood & Environmental Services informed the meeting that the council was reviewing the way local services operated in the North East of the City which included the community facilities in Rushey Mead ward, Troon ward, Belgrave ward, Humberstone & Hamilton ward and Thurncourt ward.

It was noted that 1200 responses had been received for the initial consultation in June/July and from that a set of proposals had been developed which the council was now putting out for further consultation.

Officers to note concerns and feedback during discussion which included:

- There were not many services in the area and residents wanted the Rushey Mead Library and the Rushey Mead Recreation Centre to remain open
- If feedback included new proposals would they be considered and would people in the area be consulted on alternative suggestions?
- If Rushey Mead Library moved into Rushey Mead Recreation Centre space would be reduced and not enough room for all the facilities and functions both buildings run.
- The consultation did not say how much would actually be saved by the proposals.

Residents encouraged to respond to the consultation on the proposals before 23rd October 2016. Forms were available at local council buildings and online at the council's website. More information could also be obtained by emailing: - [TNS@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:TNS@leicester.gov.uk)  
ACTION: Councillor Patel to meet local residents to consider and help with their responses on the proposal for the Recreation Centre.

ACTION: The Community Engagement Officer to book the Recreation Centre for Tuesday 11/10/16 for the meeting between Councillor Patel and local residents.

### **5 October: Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre Lunch Club Committee**

#### **Number of attendees – 8 People**

Supported by: Cllr Manjula Sood; Cllr Mansukhlal Chohan

#### **Comments**

- Lunch club committee members identified important benefits of the lunch club as healthy eating, physical, mental and social wellbeing of elderly members.
- Control over the ingredients is very important. This is currently achieved by cooking in house and sourcing the food directly to ensure the quality of the meals is good.
- The social value of the lunch club was also highlighted. The social interaction afforded by the regular lunch club sessions was thought to be beneficial in terms of avoiding higher health care costs elsewhere in the public sector.
- The lunch club committee feel that the high numbers attending – up to 70 people each weekday – are due to the quality assurance around the in-house cooking. There is a concern that attendance and income would fall if the food was brought in from an outside provider.
- The current kitchen capacity was discussed. The committee felt that it would be possible to reduce the size of the kitchen by up to half and still cook in-house. This could be partially achieved by rationalising the current ageing cooking equipment which would require investment. Also substantial storage space could be reduced through changing to daily deliveries.

- The committee felt there was further potential to increase numbers and generate additional income.
- In summary the committee said that a smaller but appropriate kitchen could be accommodated to create additional space for hire income within the centre. Kitchen operations could be reviewed as part of a change project if agreed.
- If works were required following a decision then committee would be happy to arrange an alternative offsite during this period.

### **7 October: Pukaar Group**

#### **Number of attendees: 10 people**

The key points raised were:

- Concern that a decision has already been made
- Why weren't disabled people at the earlier meetings?
- Some people said they would have no objection to the proposals so long as their group could still meet at BNC.
- Others objected to the proposals. It was felt the centre is used by many people and stops them from getting depressed. Improves people both mentally and physically, doing activities such as exercise, festivals, yoga. People look forward to attending many activities that take place within this centre.
- BNC is the heart of the (Belgrave) community.
- Where could the library go? You can't put on any programs or hire the hall, if you put the library in there. If you put the library in the Small Hall there will be no dinner or lunch club.
- If you change the way the lunch club is provided, we won't get fresh food.
- What will happen to our children if the library moves, please don't abandon them? There are changes proposed for Rushey Mead Library too.
- Why do any buildings need to change? (Officers explained that council funding was reduced resulting in pressure to save money by reorganising services)
- The group agreed their key priority was the Neighbourhood Centre. "All the staff here respect us, they don't look at our disabilities only our abilities." "People will be left at home alone if you stop the lunch club or the exercise classes." "We can't afford to cook for ourselves, it costs too much to get all the ingredients just to make food for one person."
- What will happen to those people who are disabled, where will they go? One carer looks after so many of us, this avoids the need to have a one-to-one carer.
- "We come and go shopping, socialise, we are like a family here. We have given to the centre too. We had automatic doors (room 4) installed."
- Why doesn't it (the library) go to the Peepul Centre?
- What will happen to the Library building, if it moves here?
- In summary it was felt there were already many services operating at BNC. Facilities around Cossington Street worked very well because everything is close by, and access is good. The lunch club is important as "one good meal a day makes a lot of difference to us. The food is really good here at BNC". The whole community is making use of BNC.

**7 October: Visits to Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre & Armadale Centre**  
**Number of attendees: 60 people**

Officers facilitated access to Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre and the Armadale Centre. In attendance: Cllr Vi Dempster, Cllr Rashmi Joshi, Cllr Gurinder Singh Sandhu, Keith Vaz MP.

**7 October: Bethel Pneuma Tabernacle Church**  
**Numbers attending: 4 people**

Comments

- The church has been worshipping at Thurnby Lodge Community Centre for several years. Meetings are every Sunday at 12noon – 3.30pm
- There was concern about the potential movement of activities from Ocean Road Community Centre to Thurnby Lodge Centre. What would happen to these groups and what would the impact be on existing users at Thurnby Lodge?
- Adrian Wills explained that the Neighbourhood Services team would work with the groups to find the best solutions for them. The withdrawal from one centre should not result in disruption of users at another centre. It may be the case that some small changes could be requested of groups to ensure existing activities could continue
- If Ocean Road was offered for Community Asset Transfer checks would need to be in place to protect existing.
- The group were asked to consider whether the current hire charges for council run community centres should be reviewed. It was acknowledged that budgets were reduced and that solutions should be found to enable the council to run services within the funding available. Part of the solution should involve income.
- The group highlighted that their current location at Thurnby Lodge Community Centre works very well for the group, and should continue as it is.
- It was suggested that the network of stakeholders built up through the TNS consultation process could be used to link interested groups together and to provide greater opportunities for sharing.

**12 October: Northfields Youth Centre focus group**  
**Number attending: 8 Young People**

- Young people were disappointed by the proposal to close the Youth Centre.
- They would like to know more about the alternatives which could be made available to young people in the area.
- The group were willing for officers to explore the local Play Scheme as a potential youth provision.

**12 October: Armadale Youth Centre focus group**  
**Number attending: 10**

- Young people were happy for other users to share their space when youth sessions are not happening
- They were happy that the proposal was not to close Armadale.

- They requested that Wi-Fi be installed

### **12 October: Bright Bees nursery at Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre**

#### **Number attending: 2**

- Government grants are available for the places at the nursery and therefore places are in high demand.
- Bright Bees nursery provides care for many children on a deprived estate. There is very little nearby provision elsewhere on the estate so the nursery is very important to local parents. The nursery is well regarded and has received good support from parents during the engagement and consultation periods.
- Whatever happens, the community centre is the best site for the nursery. The Netherhall building is well located for families on the estate and adaptations have been made to provide care for young children.
- Regardless of whether the building is retained under Council control or offered out to private organisations the nursery would still be required on the estate and preferably located at the Netherhall building.
- The nursery would be happy to be involved in alternative options for the running of the building depending on the decision taken.

### **13 October: Thurnby Lodge Youth and Community Centre**

#### **Number attending: 10**

- Young people were happy for other users to share their space when youth sessions are not happening
- They were happy with the proposals for the youth centres overall.

### **14 October: Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre Lunch Club**

#### **Number attending: 50 lunch club members**

In attendance: Cllr Mansukhlal Chohan; Cllr Manjula Sood; Cllr John Thomas; Keith Vaz MP; the lunch club committee

- Officers joined lunch club members, ward cllrs and Keith Vaz MP for a tour of the kitchens and a meal
- Around 50 lunch club members attended to demonstrate how the lunch club operates
- A tour of the kitchen was undertaken. The committee members explained that the food was freshly sourced and therefore good quality, healthy ingredients could be guaranteed by cooking on site.
- Many lunch club members are elderly and have attended for many years
- The case was made for the role played by the lunch club in keeping older people physically and mentally healthy through socially activity and healthy food.
- The lunch club at the neighbourhood centre serves as a base for some users. Some attendees drop in early in the morning, leave their bags at the centre and go out into town or the local area before returning for their meal at lunchtime.
- Some members said they were concerned about proposals to bring the library into the Neighbourhood Centre, as this may mean the lunch club is displaced. Some were worried that the lunch club sessions would be curtailed by bringing more activities into the centre.

- Some members made the point that the lunch club was saving the NHS money by keeping older people active and healthy.
- Lunch club members were against changing the present arrangements by bringing food in from outside. It was suggested that a healthy specification could be given to external providers. However there were concerns over loss of control over the sourcing and quality of the food.
- Some lunch club members were keen to increase lunch club income by bringing in more members. It was suggested this could be done by arranging transport (for example a minibus).
- Mr Vaz spoke in support of older people who rely on the lunch club.
- A petition to keep the lunch club without any change to operations was launched.
- Mr Vaz requested officers to accompany him for a short visit of the nearby Belgrave Library. He spoke to a number of users who supported the current facility.

### **18 October: Belgrave area Focus Group (resident led)**

**Number attending: 12**

Note of main discussion points:

The focus group was initiated by a local resident and facilitated by officers. Attendees had expressed an interest in attending a focus group at the earlier consultation event on 27 September, or from previous focus group meetings.

The main points were as follows:

Consultation

- There were suggestions that the consultation process could have been more extensive to ensure the widest possible reach. It was suggested that further work with community partners, business and voluntary sectors would be beneficial.
- There was feedback that some people are not clear what moving the library would mean in practice – would there be any reduction in service e.g. computers, books and staff?
- The consultation has been made available in a range of languages and with interpretation services at public meetings. However it was felt that people who cannot read (any language) or who do not use the services could have missed the consultation. There was concern that some communities in the area are hard to reach.
- There was a concern that the community believe a decision has already been taken. Adrian Wills confirmed this was definitely not the case but all agreed this perception was not helpful.
- The area based approach to consultation was questioned.
- Officers confirmed the Belgrave Business Association and the Belgrave Network Group had been contacted as part of the consultation. Leaflets were also distributed to local places of worship and doctors' surgeries. Separate youth focus groups had taken place during the same period.
- It was asked if the consultation could be extended.

Proposal to relocate Belgrave Library service

- The proposal to move Belgrave Library from the current building on Cossington Street into the Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre was the main concern of attendees
- “We need the library and the Neighbourhood Centre. You can’t merge the buildings together – it won’t work”.
- “Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre and the Library are both absolutely vital”
- It was suggested the buildings should both be retained by increasing use and reviewing charging arrangements to raise income.
- It was suggested that services should be expanded to address the growing population in the area including the Ross Walk estate.
- It was stated with passion that the library is about more than books and computers. “It is a community hub offering vital interaction between knowledgeable library staff and local people. The library is crucial to the wellbeing of many local people.”
- One attendee was concerned about the proposal to introduce self-service kiosks as this would reduce interaction between staff and customers
- The book stock should not be reduced.
- The library was seen as a valuable local resource as it is used by all people of all ages, and is especially important to children, students and also older people.
- One attendee made a distinction between the library service and the building. Both are very important to the community, but the library building is seen as “a part of my heritage” and the place itself was of high value.
- The group rejected the proposal to close the library

#### Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre

- Several attendees agreed that a more strategic approach was required overall
- Would it be possible to retain both the library and the Neighbourhood Centre by working with other sectors including business, voluntary and faith sectors?
- Several attendees felt that BNC was not being used efficiently and that there is capacity within the centre to increase occupancy and income
- The group felt the buildings should be reviewed together with other (non-council) buildings in the area. Examples included The Peepul Centre and the Health Centre which were felt to have spare capacity for community use.
- Several attendees identified the strong role played by the BNC in health and wellbeing, especially for elderly users. The lunch club was felt to provide good value for money as it keeps older people active and socially connected. BNC was described as a lifeline for some users.
- It was felt that Adult Social Care and the Health Service should be involved in options for the savings at a strategic level

#### Lunch club

- The lunch club is very popular and plays an important role in keeping older people mentally and physically healthy.
- Two attendees felt that the lunch club should continue to cook food in house and that income could be increased by bringing more people in.
- It was stated that income has already been increased significantly by the involvement of the lunch club committee

## Solutions

- There was a consensus that organisations should work together to find solutions for the area.
- Some attendees felt there may be options for the lunch club to increase income by working with the faith sector for example. One lunch club member raised the need for transport to enable less mobile customers to attend – some of the group thought there may be charitable solutions to this.
- Some attendees were keen for the council to work with the business sector and possibly to explore a Community Asset Transfer of the Neighbourhood Centre to enable the community to access funding opportunities.
- The group confirmed they would be happy to meet again to explore more options and solutions.
- “People relate to these two buildings. We agree there has to be some change, but we should not be closing them. Development of services is required by working with other sectors. The answer is to increase income in this way.”

### **18 October: Islah Trust**

#### **Number attending: 6 people**

- An initial meeting was held during the engagement period in July 2016
- The group members confirmed that there was a general consensus the building should be offered for community asset transfer as they would like to see a sustainable future for the building.
- There was concern that very few new groups access the building. Islah would like to see the building open for more regular use.
- The group were concerned about what would happen if the building was leased to a non-local group – how would existing users be protected?
- Whatever the outcome of TNS the group are eager to continue using the building as it is ideally located for their members.

### **24 October: Rushey Mead Recreation Centre users including Men’s Milap Group and Panjabi Arts & Literary Academy UK**

#### **Number attending: 37**

Attending: Cllr Rita Patel; Cllr Piara Singh Clair

The meeting was arranged by ward councillors following an earlier meeting on 11 October to identify potential solutions for buildings through community involvement.

The key points raised were:

- An officer confirmed that no decisions had been made with regard to the buildings. It is not time to produce business plans as there is no decision to asset transfer buildings at the moment. The groups were invited to have a say on the future of the buildings, and potential options they have identified.
- On behalf of the whole group of local people Cllr Patel expressed that the first preference is that the council continue to run both centres
- Some groups did express an interest in taking over the recreation centre



- A general view was that if the council needed to reduce the number of buildings it runs, Rushey Mead organisations could work on a plan to take over the Recreation centre whilst the Council continues to maintain the library.
- An alternative suggestion was for the Local authority to retain responsibility for both buildings but for local people to develop and implement a business plan increase income at the recreation centre to offset running costs.
- The officer explained the next step would be to publish the consultation findings report and then propose an updated set of recommendations. When an executive decision has been made on the consultation we will know if there is an opportunity for Community Asset Transfer (CAT).
- If buildings were offered for CAT, more detailed financial information would be required.

Other comments regarding the Recreation Centre:

- There is a lack of car parking directly outside although shopping centre car park is nearby for about 20 cars. The group confirmed that most service users are locally based and walk to the building.
- It was also noted that the disabled toilets could be improved.
- People present confirmed that they felt there is no capacity to combine the Library with the Recreation Centre as there are too many people using the Recreation centre
- This is also the case for Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre and Belgrave Library
- Another option proposed by the group was to build on the side of the library, then that could be used as a community hall, freeing up the Recreation Centre for disposal. It was noted that the expense may be prohibitive.

Councillors thanked the group for their comments and ideas

### **25 October: Asian Towers Lunch Club**

#### **Attending: 2 people**

- The club attracts elderly people in Leicester mainly from the Melton road area but also some from Narborough Road & Evington. It has been running on a voluntary basis for over 30 years and provides vegetarian meals for people from an Asian background.
- Many attendees have mobility issues. The club has been based at the Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) for many years.
- Around half of the members also attend the weekday lunch club
- Average attendance is 40 including volunteers
- Attendees mainly walking or travel by bus, or mobility scooters. Disabled attendees share lifts. 1 or 2 have blue badges and use car park if possible.
- Food is cooked on site by volunteers. Asian Towers could operate from a reduced kitchen, but could not continue if there was no commercial kitchen at all.
- It would be difficult to source food from outside providers because:
  - there are religious and health requirements which cannot be catered for in the area (eg Jain food)

- freshly cooked food is a cultural draw
- there is a dislike of the “restaurant” taste
- Many elders can’t eat spicy food – only in house cooks can cater for the full range of dietary requirements
- In summary it was felt that the club would not survive the loss of a kitchen, but a reduced kitchen would be operable.

Other comments:

- Belgrave area is extremely densely populated and number of residents per house is high. There are also a number of new developments in the area. The future needs of the people living in the area should be taken into account.
- Belgrave Library is bucking the national trend – high use by young people and also for IT use.
- What about the Sports Centre? There is quite a lot of land in this area – would require capital, but could the Council rebuild a genuine multi-service centre

**25 October: Thurnby Lodge Community Association**

**Number attending: 9 people**

**Attending: Cllr Teresa Aldred, members of the TLCA**

The key points raised were:

- Unanimous support for retaining the Thurnby Lodge Community centre under council control and within a partnership.
- Youth activities help to contain anti-social behaviour. Key services bring older people together to overcome isolation and to promote healthy eating. An Alzheimers café and a police office are also provided from the community centre.
- Many volunteers support activities
- Multiple services and functions at the centre offer the one remaining focus of council supported activity in the area. Too many other council services have been lost so the residents can ill afford to lose the Thurnby Lodge Centre.

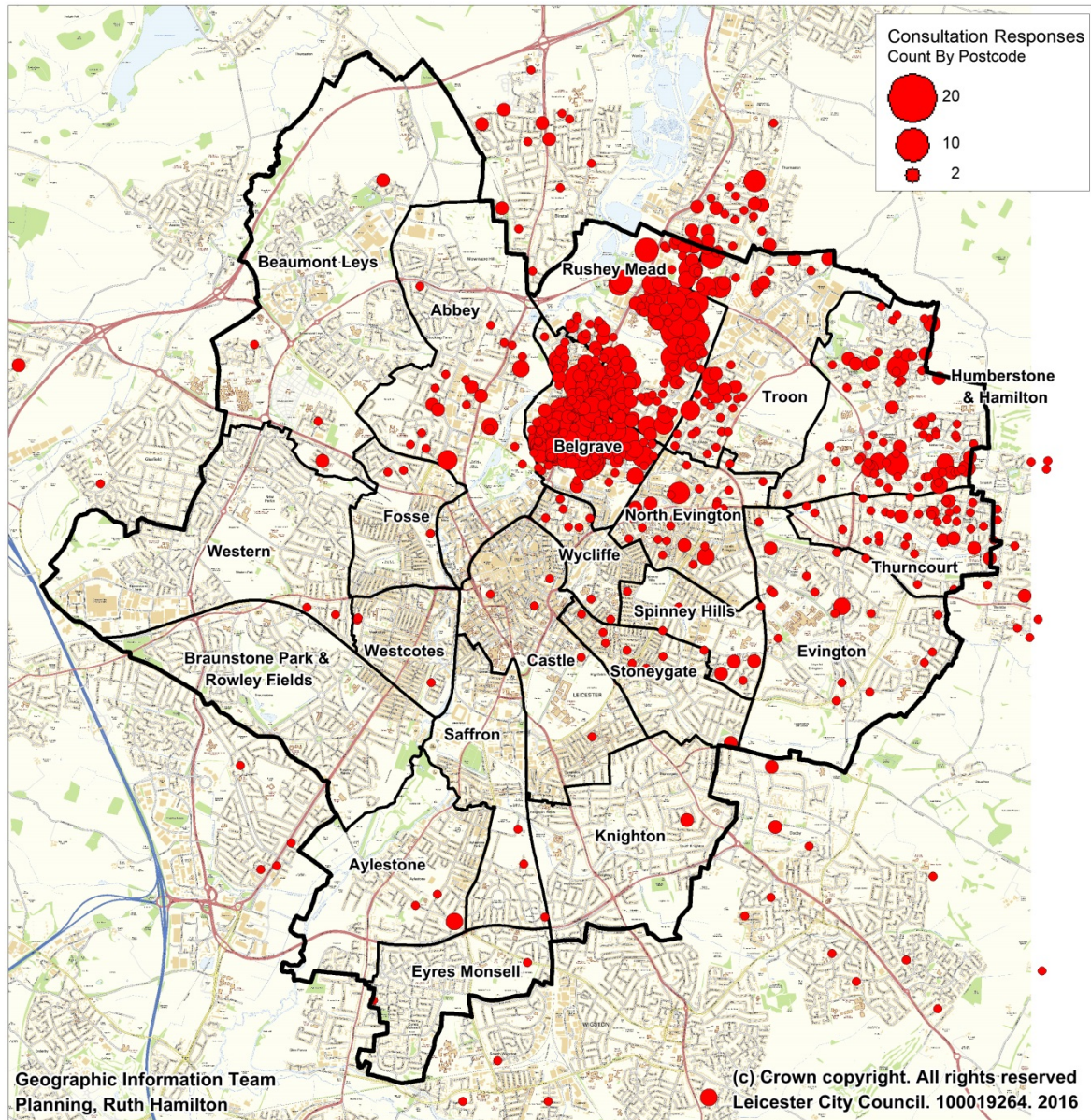
Ocean Road Community Centre

- There are some concerns over relocating the service to Thurnby Lodge Community Centre and possibly the Scout Hut if required, as there may be insufficient spaces and time slots
- If necessary, Thurnby Lodge Community Association (TLCA) may wish to put in a business case for a CAT of the centre and would consider running this themselves in order to ensure continued access to space for local groups. Concerns were expressed regarding outside groups having control of the site. The CAT criteria were outlined at this point.
- If the building is to be asset transferred, it was felt that investment in the centre is required such as a kitchen and toilet refit.
- Running costs of the site were requested.

## Written and Online Comments and Responses

In total 1,436 responses were received up until the closing date of the consultation. The following map shows the locations of respondents where a useable postcode was provided (92.8% of total responses):

### TNS North East - Consultation Responses By Postcode



The following table shows the breakdown of responses by their resident wards:

<b>Ward</b>	<b>Count</b>
Belgrave Ward	486
Rushey Mead Ward	370
Humberstone and Hamilton Ward	104
Troon Ward	69
Thurncourt Ward	42
North Evington Ward	34
Abbey Ward	33
Evington Ward	21
Spinney Hills Ward	11
Stoneygate Ward	11
Wycliffe Ward	8
Beaumont Leys Ward	6
Castle Ward	5
Aylestone Ward	5
Fosse Ward	4
Saffron Ward	3
Westcotes Ward	3
Knighton Ward	2
Eyres Monsell Ward	2
Western Ward	2

**92%** of the total responses received (where a valid postcode was supplied) were from households within Leicester City. **83%** of valid postcodes supplied were from households within the North East TNS Area.

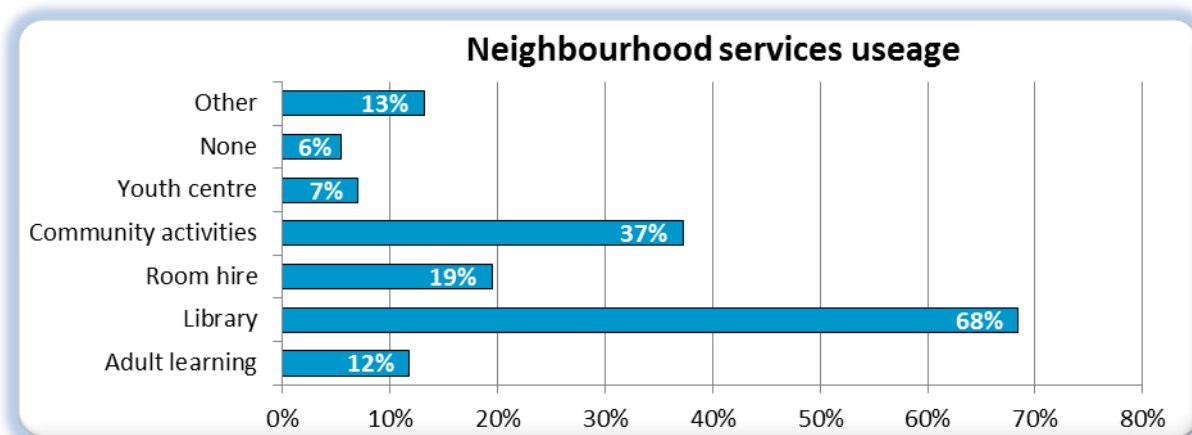
<b>Overview of postcodes supplied</b>	<b>Count</b>
Within Leicester City	1221
Missing / Incomplete / Incorrect PC	104
Outside Leicester City	111

## Views and comments

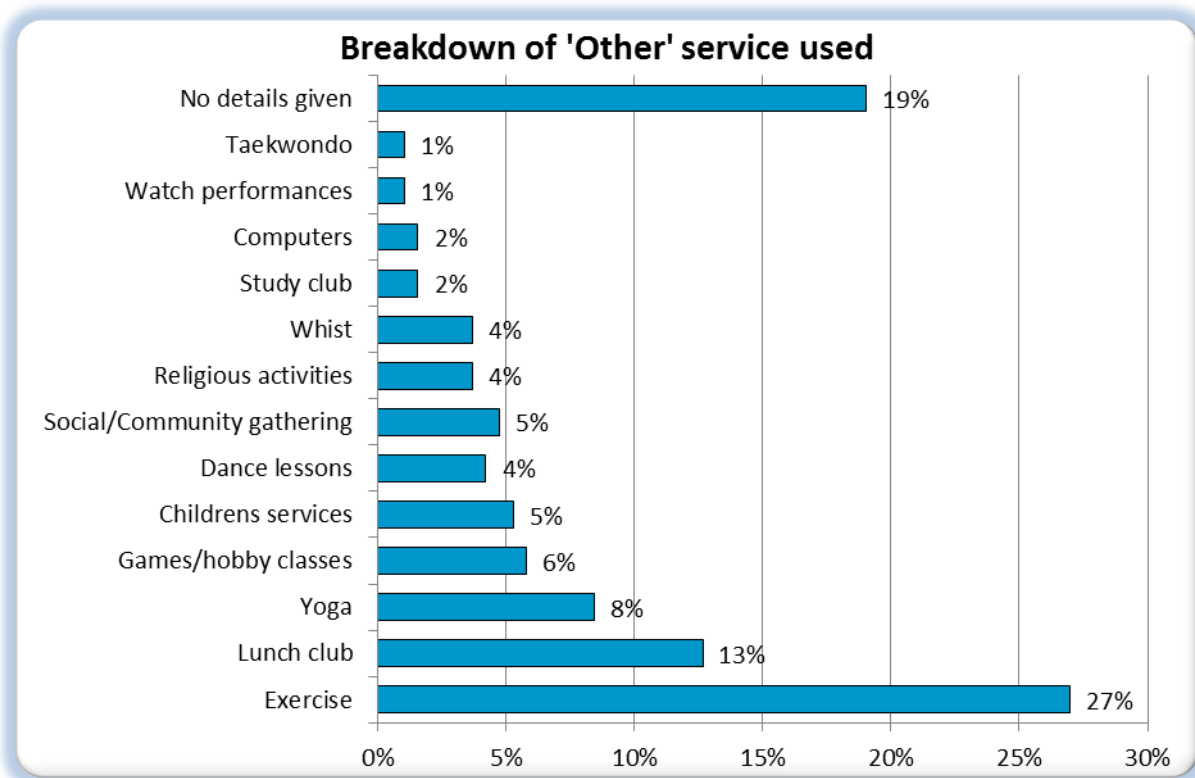
This section contains details of how people responded to the consultation questions. A copy of the questionnaire used has been included as Appendix A to this document. Responses to the questions asked are as follows:

### Q.1. Which neighbourhood services do you use?

This was a mandatory field for people to complete and so all 1,436 responses provided an answer to this question. It should be noted, however, that an option was to indicate that no services were used, which 79 (6%) of respondents selected. Respondents were allowed to make multiple choices for this question and the following chart shows the percentage that selected each option:

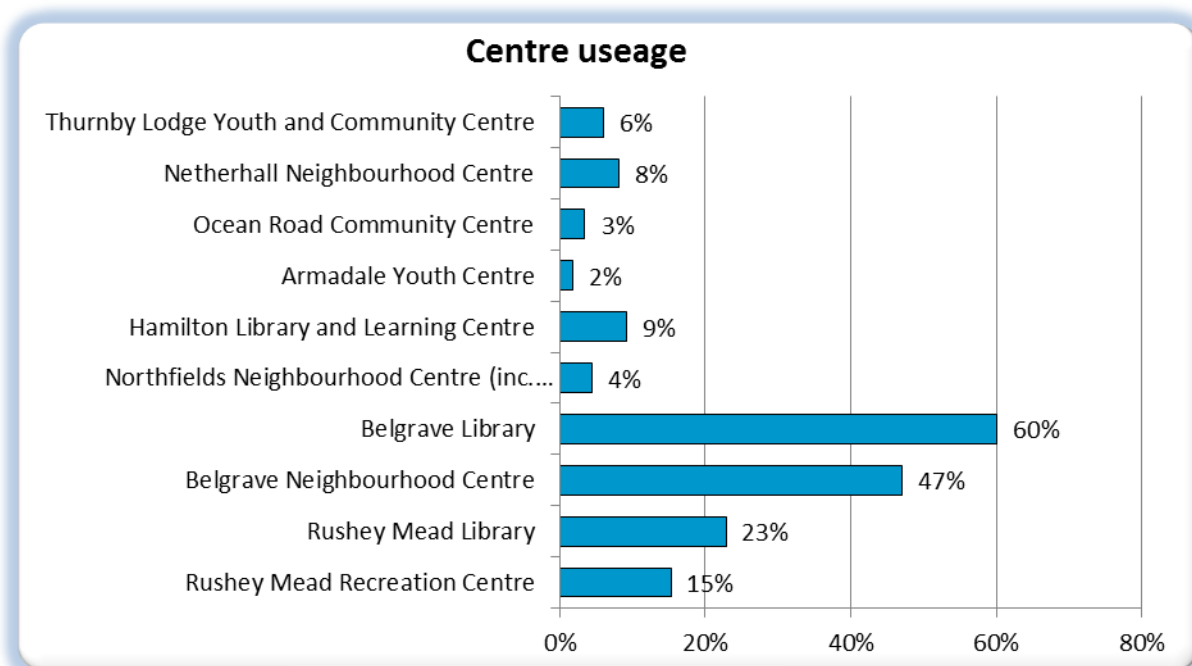


A breakdown of the 13% of responses relating to the 'other' category in the graph above are shown in the graph below:



### Q.2. Which centres do you use?

A total of 1,401 (97%) of respondents provided an answer to this question and 36 respondents (3%) did not provide an answer to this question. Many respondents made multiple choices for this question and the following chart shows the percentage that selected each option.



### Q.3. What is your home post code?



The responses to this question are covered in the tables provided on pages 26 and 27 of this document

**Q.4. How would these proposals benefit you?**

A total of 1,219 (85%) of respondents answered this question. This was an open question and did not put any restrictions on the respondent as to how to answer. A wide range of points were made by respondents including statements relating to support for, or disagreement with the proposal.

Note that many respondents made points relating to questions 5 and 6. The points made have been included in the analysis for those questions (below).

Where respondents talked of benefits, they answered this question in one of two ways:

- How the existing services benefit me
- How the new proposals would benefit me

The responses can be categorised as follows:

Response category	Number of respondents
Indicating benefits from the proposals	105
Indicating no benefits from the proposals	602
Indicating the proposals will make no difference either way	21
Don't know	18
Current services benefit me	396
No response given	217

Of those who indicated benefits specifically from the proposals, the following types of benefit could be identified:

Benefit category	Number of respondents
Convenient location	49
Computer access	18
Co-location of services	14
Bring adult learning classes in to Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre	5
Better access to Hamilton Library community hall	4
Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre – review of room hire arrangements to create space	2
Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre car parking controls	2
Community Asset Transfer	2
Benefit not specified	9



**Q.5. Is there anything in the proposal that would stop you from using neighbourhood services? If yes, please give the reason(s).**

A total of 834 (58%) of respondents answered this question. This was an open question and did not put any restrictions on the respondent as to how to answer. A wide range of points were made by respondents including strong support for specific local services and buildings.

Note that many respondents made points relating to questions 4 and 6. Those points made have been included in the analysis for those questions (above and below) to avoid duplication.

Responses to this question can be generally categorised as follows:

Response category	Number of respondents
The proposals would restrict / stop access for services	546
The proposals would not restrict access to services	101
Other comments	187
No comments	602

The question also asked respondents for the reasons why the proposals would stop them from using neighbourhood services. Responses given to this element of the question can be generally categorised as follows:

Suggestion category	Number of respondents
Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre will become overcrowded leading to poor quality / fewer services	211
Unable to travel to alternative facility	80
Loss of suitable community space at Netherhall	67
Parking facilities inadequate at proposed site	53
Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre too busy/noisy for library	41
Quality of reorganised service will not be suitable for me	41
Rushey Mead buildings are not large enough to amalgamate services	40
Children and young people will not want to/be able to use library at Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre	39
Self-service terminals may be a barrier e.g. for elderly users	37
Alternative building/space is not welcoming	24
Festivals/large events will not be possible at Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre if library relocates	22
Loss of suitable community space at Northfields	17
Raised hire charges will prevent me from accessing services at Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre	16
Loss of suitable community space at Ocean Road Community Centre	14

Loss of pre-school at Netherhall will affect local parents	10
Lack of community facilities in general on the Northfields estate	8

**A selection of the responses made is listed below:**

(Belgrave) “Yes self service will not be helpful as some books may be stolen and space - how many books can you get in there? We may have to wait even longer to order the books so access will be delayed. Further away from park and swimming baths so children will be loitering around and not be safe. Printing services will be affected. I pick my recycling orange bags from there too! We don't know people using the centre at the same time so whether the children are safe or not????????? At least in library there are staff present!”

(Belgrave) “There will be parking problems. The library will be noisy. And there will be reduced space for activities like Yoga and exercise.”

(Belgrave) “Yes, I would stop using many services if not all.

1. Room Hire:- I would stop using this facility as being Asian we have big functions in the house and I hire the hall. If I have a party at the hall where there will be library and other things combined I would not be able to keep eye on people attending my function.

2. Library:- If it is combined with Neighbourhood when ever there is a function or classes going on (i.e Dance class) then there will no quite area which is what library are for.”

“All the events run by library to bring community together will stop. I feel this would impact the community very much and some people would be socially isolated due to closure of the services. Not everyone able to afford Day care therefore uses library and community centres for social inclusions “

“The Belgrace NC would be too cramped with everyone squeezing into a limited space and books would be reduced.”

“BNC Lunch club: Yes, kitchen foods, fresh cooked food there. Will not available. Do not like outside food.”

“I run the Friday Bingo club with an average of 25-30 players who enjoy playing. (The other aspect). The meeting of those playing is companionship for those and many are, their getting away from loneliness.”

“Belgrave Library - It would only benefit us if they retained Sunday opening”

“The Hamilton Community Hall improvements would be good for better access”

“My younger siblings use the Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre to have dance lessons and dance exams. If you sell this building this will no longer happen! I enjoy to watch my sisters dance and they love to dance. If you sell the building where will they dance? The building is perfect!!”

(Belgrave) “I am autistic - I don't like change - I find it difficult. If the opening hours, e.g. Sunday opening retained that would be good. If the atmosphere/ safe place could be retained that would be excellent.”

(Northfields) "Don't shut it down because there wont be any thing to do in the area and if there is no youth centre people will do bad things."

(Northfields) "Stop my support from youth workers & where I meet friends."

(Belgrave Library) "Please not close library because I will feel upset and my friends will not be able to there homework at the library as we don't have Wi-Fi and computer at home so we come to the library almost every day to do our homework if the library shuts down so please don't close down the Leicester belgrave library."

"(Belgrave Library) yes if the belgrave library closes then I am aware that lots of children will also stop coming as they know that around the neighbourhood centre the area is unsafe. And therefore parents will forbid them to go out to the centre to get books and etc this will be a shame as whenever I go to the library I see all the young youth having a great time doing and helping each other with their homework. I also see how hard student revise their exams and see the study support teachers help when needed. This makes me feel upset because if all of these services stop then the youth will change and will be out of control as they will have nowhere to go for help support and advice."

(Belgrave) "I have significant sight loss so do not know layout of neighbourhood centre. This would cause unease of using this building, also self serve terminals would be impossible for me."

(Belgrave) "If the cost of room hire increases I fear exercise classes will become too expensive to attend. I meet my friends at these classes so my social life would be reduced."

(Belgrave) "Yes, if you get rid of it, it will be a great loss for myself and others using it. Especially people that have difficulty with languages whereas we can get lots of help attending the library."

(Netherhall pre-school) "Daughter goes to the nursery and she is suspected autistic and the change wouldn't be good for her as she doesn't like change"

(Belgrave) "This proposal will severely reduce the library service that can be offered to the people of Belgrave. More importantly the children will not be able to access the services they need. 1006 children took part in the summer reading challenge at Belgrave Library this year. Far higher than ANY other city library"

"Ocean Road should stay open for elderly people living close by. We should have to locate to Thurnby Lodge otherwise (bus ride). Armadale which I use on Mondays AM we could locate to Armadale youth centre (not too bad) "

"BNC Yes. I am able to travel directly to the BNC by public transport and the facilities for my exercise classes (ladies only) are perfect. There is adequate room and all the ladies attending with me find the sessions very beneficial for our physical and mental well being. The potential reduction in floor space and the attendance of males will put me and other ladies off from attending the BNC."

"I am very disappointed for the library to move to the BNC - BNC is not as child friendly as the current setting of Belgrave Library next to the park/children play area. BNC is quite gloomy/dark/big building and not as cheerful as current Belgrave library. This can put people off from access library for reading and personal develop purpose."

**Q.6. Any other comments?**

A total of 903 (63%) of respondents answered this question. This was an open question and did not put any restrictions on the respondent as to how to answer. A wide range of points were made by respondents including strong support for specific local services and buildings.

Note that many respondents made points relating to questions 4 and 5. The points made have been included in the analysis for these questions (above) to avoid duplication.

Responses to this question can be generally categorised as follows:

Response category	Number of respondents
Against Belgrave Library relocation	410
Keep local services	119
Don't close my centre	112
Against Belgrave lunch club reorganisation	49
Community activities keep older people healthy, reducing impact on NHS	33
Reduce council staff / wages	25
Do not close Rushey Mead Library	16
Larger building/library extension needed at Rushey Mead	14
Retain Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre instead of Armadale Centre	12
No cuts / save money from other services	12
Youth Centres important for young people / keep me out of trouble	7
Raise hire charges to increase income	4
Other	69
No comments	533

**A selection of the responses made is listed below:**

“LCC have not considered that Northfield Centre is the only centre on the 'Troon' cluster. The youth in this area will not have an outlet if this centre is closed”

“If there is an option between The Rushey Mead Library and the Rushey Mead Recreation Centre, then I would definitely choose the library as people of all ages use and can use this facility. My decision is mainly based on our future generation and benefits they would derive from a well-facilitated library.”

“The council's Proposals make sense. I agree with the proposals entirely to get rid of some buildings as having been to Ocean Road community centre and Northfields nothing much is going on here. So it makes sense to make better use of the centre.”

(Belgrave) “Need to invest in the current buildings to make them fit for purpose, not sell them off or move services into other more cramped buildings. These venues are important

hubs for the community, especially older people who already have few places to go to and to socialise. Maybe some of the money earmarked for improving Belgrave should go into retaining the library.”

(Belgrave Asian Towers lunch club) “I am the president of the club. i would like to have club running. Its 28 years it is runnin we serve to elderly and disabled people. we serve hindu Jain food which is very healthy...”

(Hamilton Library) “...There should be flexibility on usage time for all within limits. This has put a stumbling block on our usage. We have been in Hamilton for over 20 years and paid thousands of pounds over the years for council tax. It is time now we get the facilities to use for all.”

(Netherall NC) “Netherhall neighbourhood centre is a thriving well used building. None of the groups are able to move to the Armadale centre as it is not a suitable building for our needs.”

(BNC) “More access for disabled people

- Use surplus building for elderly people. Activities i.e. exercise club, yoga club, luncheon club.

- designate infant entrance, disabled parking”

(Belgrave library) “We attend the library also for a diabetes group. we have 45 members. Will be very upset and it will not help them, will be isolated.”

(Belgrave) “This proposal will change the local community in many ways literacy levels, social cohesion, access to internet + advice services to name but a few.”

(Netherhall NC) “I danced at Jill Gough School of Dance for 10 years and now my daughter attends. Most of the pupils are from the area. It would be devastating to close this centre”

“The services that the Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre provides for the elderly and vulnerables must be retained. For some people the lunch club may be the only opportunity to socialise with others and prevent loneliness and depression”

“I volunteer at the Belgrave library and help young children to read. I know this service will be also lost and disadvantage as well. It is just not building but it is our Belgrave library which have grown up and want to keep the library where it is for our community, our children and the elderly.”

“(Netherhall NC) The only way I would stop using it is if the Council knock it down. I have been coming to the centre since the dancing school started here. It has taken many years for them to find an ideal place to teach their classes and are very settled here.”

(Belgrave) “The services will be different. If you assure me the same number of books or the amount of genres available would still be there.”

“I understand there needs to be savings made, but the consequences of finding alternative uses and time it may take will probably end up costing us even more!! When proper planning and use for the buildings are decided, then it may be the right time to discuss.”

“If they close Netherhall NC and move us to the Armadale centre we will have to finish the bowls group because its not big enough. Same applys to Northfields NC”

“Very surprised that Netherhall Community is under threat considering high level of use. Central location. It would be a great loss to the local and surrounding areas.”

“The Rushey Mead recreation centre should be run as is and the library to run by community members. The belgrave neighbourhood centre needs upgrading/uplifting for it's current use and about time library was part of that building. The asian food should be available and left as is.”

“If you move library into Neighbourhood Centre, that would create problems for us because we do various activities there. We do have exercise sessions every week and that has been very useful to us. It has positive effect on our health e.g. we have to take less medication, it reduces the stress and it has also effect on arthritis.”

“Why did you create so many centres? This is the reason for the present situation. Secondly, the library should always be separate because people can read and do other activities without any disturbance. If you rent out other halls, that would generate extra income. If the library is moved to main hall, it will create many problems. Thank you.”

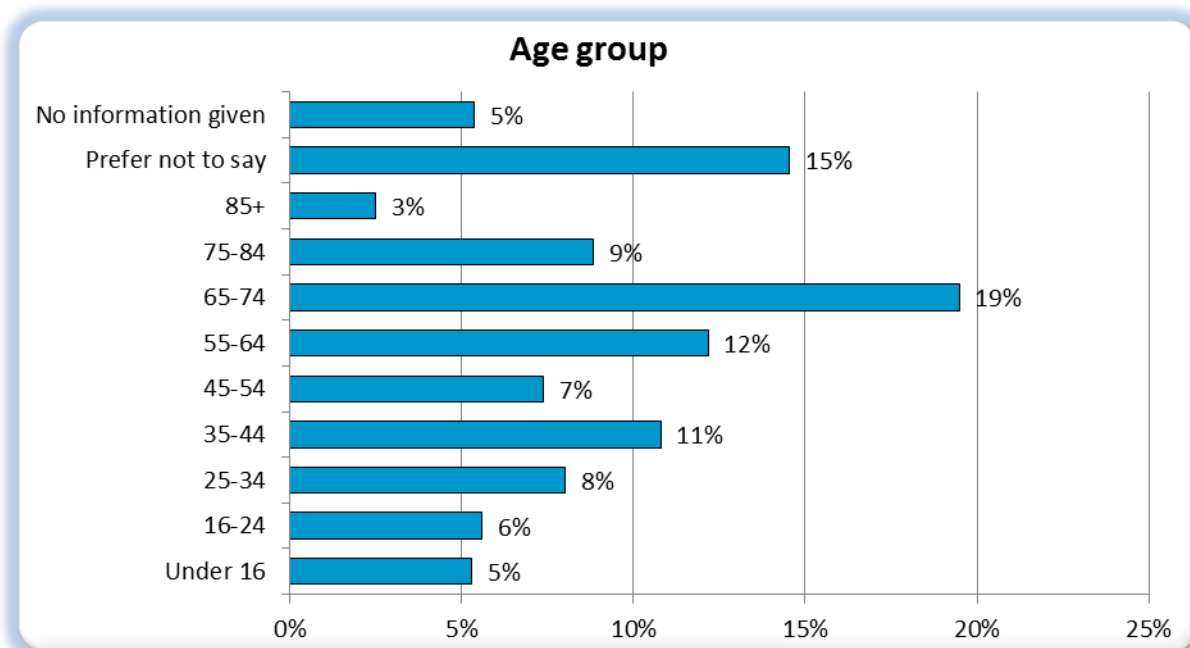
“You should keep the library open because they run English classes, have newspapers and help our children with their homework. That is good for childrens education.”

## Demographic information

The questionnaire included a number of demographic questions to assist in the analysis of results from the consultation. The following is a summary of the responses received:

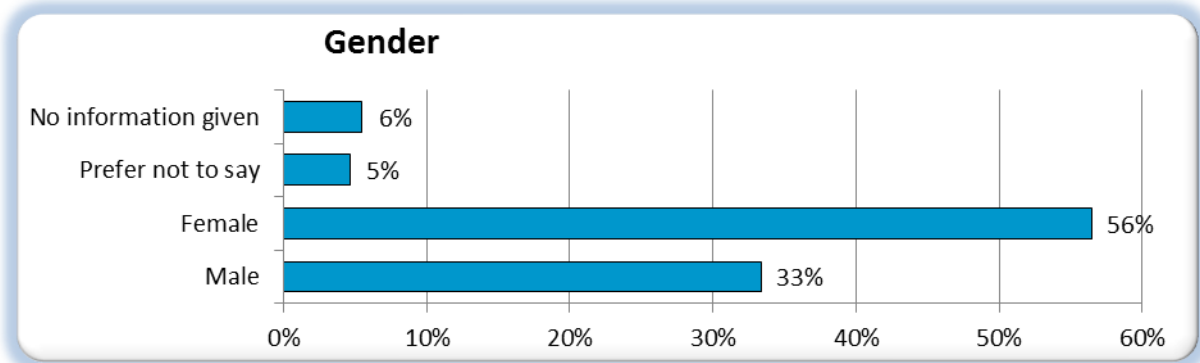
### Q.1. Age

A total of 1359 (95%) of respondents answered this question, with a further 209 (15%) electing a preference not to say. The graph below shows the distribution of the age ranges of the respondents:



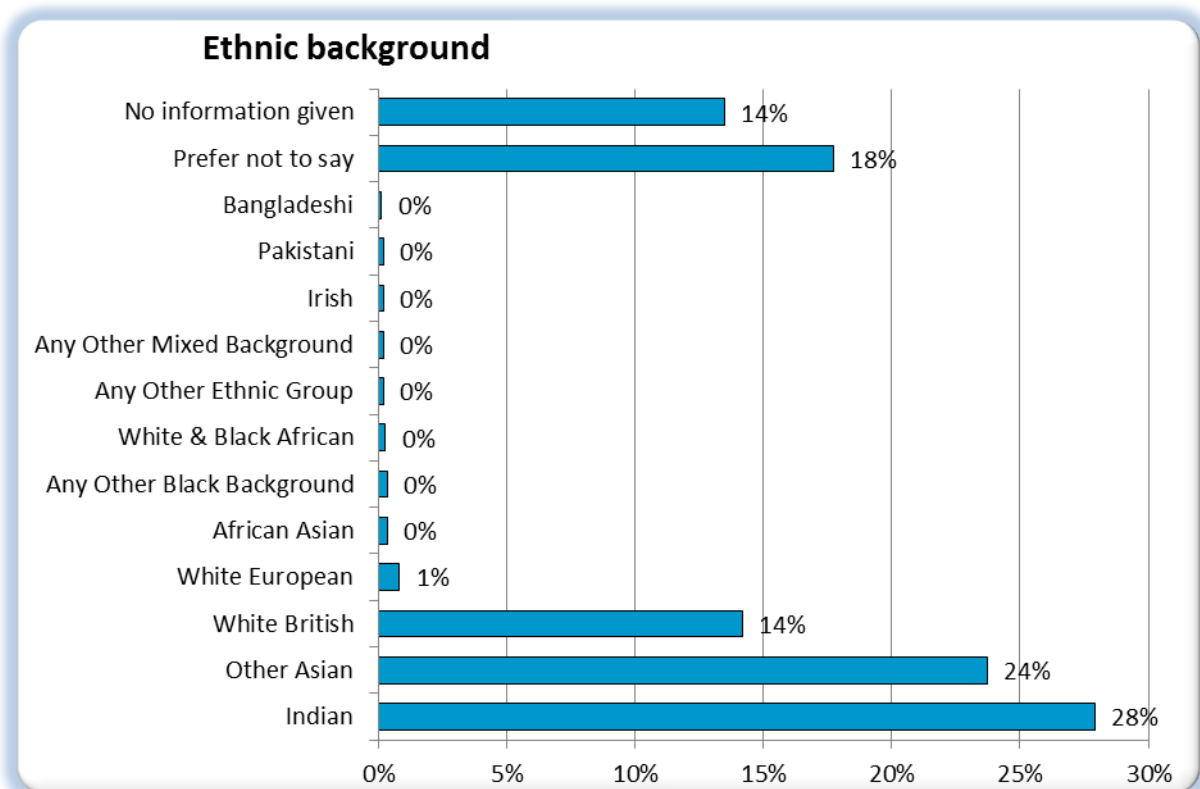
### Q.2. Gender

A total of 1357 (95%) of respondents answered this question, with a further 67 (5%) electing a preference not to say. The graph below shows the distribution of the gender split of the respondents:



### Q.3. Ethnic Background

A total of 1,242 (86%) of respondents answered this question, with a further 255 (18%) electing a preference not to say. The graph below shows the distribution of the gender split of the respondents:

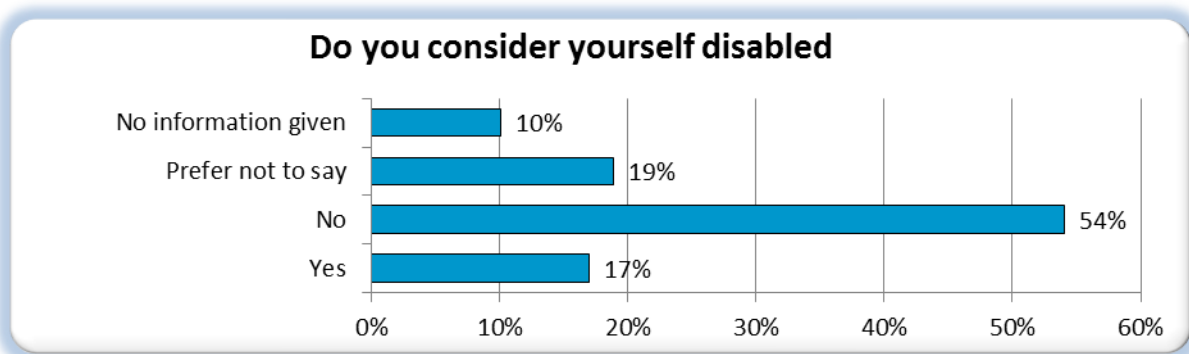


Please note this question was an open question without categories for the respondents to select. In order to produce the above charts a number of responses were categorised as follows:

- Those who described their ethnicity as a religion that is typically considered Asian have been assigned "Other Asian"
- Those who described themselves as Asian without stating Indian have been assigned "Other Asian"
- Those who described themselves as either British, White or English with no further detail have been assigned "White British"
- Those who described themselves as Black with no further detail have been assigned "Any other black background"

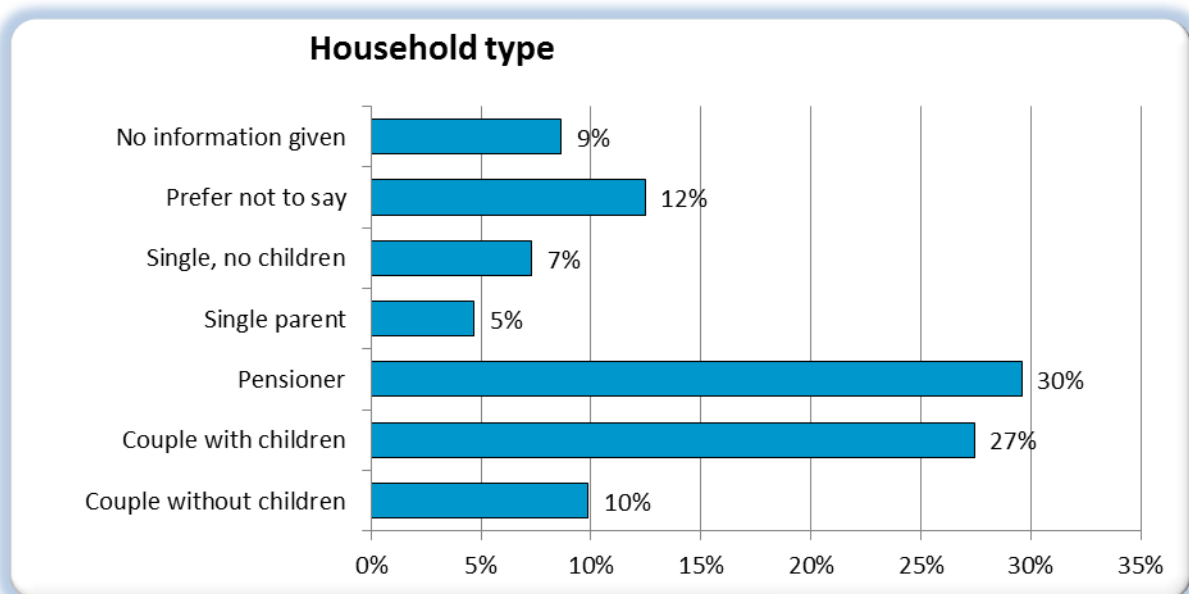
**Q.4. Disability**

A total of 1,291 (90%) of respondents answered this question, with a further 271 (19%) electing a preference not to say. The following graph shows a breakdown of respondents categorising themselves as disabled or not:



**Q.5. Household Type**

A total of 1,312 (91%) of respondents answered this question, with a further 179 (12%) electing a preference not to say. This question provided categories from which to choose and asked respondents to select one option only. The following graph shows a breakdown of how respondents categorised themselves:





## Submissions

Some groups made submissions during the course of the engagement period through a range of channels.

These included:

- Mellor Primary School – letter signed by Head Teacher
- Email submissions from residents
- Unsolicited interest in Community Asset Transfer opportunities
- Email requests for further information

## Petition

A petition has been submitted with regards to the proposed relocation of Belgrave Library to Belgrave Centre, and the proposed changes to the operation of the Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre Lunch Club.

A total of 2,865 signatories were validated. An e-petition was also submitted supported by 2,253 people who gave a postcode in the city.

The combined text of the petitions is as follows:

The petition is in the following form:

“We the undersigned firmly oppose Leicester City Council’s plan to:

1) Close down the Belgrave Library with the intention of moving it to the Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre. There is no room for books, computers, tables and other resources inside the Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre and this will mean downscaling of the services. Both buildings are regularly and heavily used.

Belgrave Library is an invaluable resource for the pupils and families of local schools. Access to high quality literature is particularly essential during this period of economic hardship. Losing Belgrave Library will have a massively damaging impact on the education and future life chances of young people in the area.

2) Alter the provision of meals for the lunch club members. The kitchen at the Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre is adequate to provide freshly cooked and culturally appropriate vegetarian meals for the elderly; disabled and diabetic members of the lunch club.

Members are paying £ 4.20 per plate for this per day. This lunch club is vitally important for the vulnerable and lonely elderly people who come and socialise at the centre

3) We strongly oppose Leicester City Council's plan to close the Belgrave Library and to relocate it to the Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre.”



## **CONCLUSIONS**

This consultation is to be used to consider the draft proposals for transformation of services in the North East area of the city.

The method of consultation using large open consultation events and also smaller targeted group meetings upon request has been very well received by both members of the community and staff and has proved a successful method of seeking points of view and suggestions to take into account. The promotion of paper and online questionnaires has proved particularly successful, generating the highest response rate in the TNS process to date.

The number of responses received to the questionnaire and attendance numbers for the various meetings held indicate a good level of participation, and the demographic data collected demonstrates that the responses are representative of the community i.e. the demographic breakdown of responses shows good involvement from a wide range of stakeholders in the area.

The key messages to be taken forward from this consultation period are:

- Libraries and the functions they perform are highly valued as community hubs. In particular local residents value access to online information and services, promotion of reading for learning and leisure and support for children and young people's educational needs.
- There was significant support for the activities in community centres which are important for local areas
- There was good support for youth sessions from youth centre users. The key building consideration was the provision of a safe space which the young people felt was theirs. There was interest in working together with officers to find alternative solutions where potential building changes would impact upon youth sessions.
- There was general agreement with all groups that savings can be achieved by reorganising services to make better use of buildings
- In general there was agreement between groups that the services provided were more important than particular buildings. However in the Belgrave area many service users were keen to see both the library and the Neighbourhood Centre buildings retained.
- There was concern at the busiest sites about amalgamating services into fewer buildings.
- There was concern about proposals to reorganise lunch club provision at Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre in order to make better use of the building.
- There is some support for transferring of assets through the Community Asset Transfer procedure for less well used buildings, but also some concern that the community and existing users would continue to be able to use the buildings post transfer.
- There was enthusiasm amongst some groups to work with the council to find solutions, in particular at Rushey Mead with regard to potential asset transfer should the Recreation Centre be offered and at Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre with regard to raising income through room hire.
- Many respondents are concerned about the proposal to relocate Belgrave Library to Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre. Key concerns were around the availability of

sufficient space and the impact on existing services and activities.

- Respondents are concerned to ensure that existing activities and services can continue under the building changes proposed
- There is strong support for the Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre and for the pre-school which operates there.

## **Lessons Learned**

- The consultation meetings have been a good method of engagement with a wide range of stakeholders including ward councillors, the local MP, staff, partners and members of the public
- There has been a good response rate to the engagement process with 1,436 completed forms and good attendance at the focus group meetings. The distribution strategy has been key in achieving this, with promotion of paper and online questionnaires and translated materials. It is to be noted that 127 responses were received in Gujarati (around 9%).
- The overall approach of involving stakeholders and members of the public early has proven beneficial as not only does it help to ensure that all concerns are heard, it also provides sufficient time to respond to these concerns on an evidenced basis
- The process undertaken has enjoyed good co-operation between stakeholder individuals and groups, as well as other services
- A similar model of engagement will be used for the other areas of the city

Appendix A: TNS North East consultation questionnaire

# Transforming Neighbourhood Services

## North east area consultation



[leicester.gov.uk/tns](http://leicester.gov.uk/tns)

### Background

Leicester City Council is reorganising neighbourhood services across the city. This includes libraries, community and youth centres and adult learning centres.

Significant cuts in government funding mean that we cannot continue to run services as we do now. But before making any proposals, in June and July 2016 we spoke to local people to find out what they wanted from their services. We also asked for suggestions for the future.



### What is happening now

Now we have developed a way forward and we would like to know your views. These proposals bring services together and make savings.



### Give your views

We are holding two events to discuss the proposals on Monday 26 September, 6 - 7.30pm at Hamilton Library and on Tuesday 27 September, 6.30 - 8pm at Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre. Please come along, or give your views online or fill out the form in this leaflet.



## Proposed changes

### Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre and Belgrave Library

- Consider moving Belgrave Library into Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre
- Consider moving some adult learning classrooms to Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre to deliver more English language and other classes
- Explore a range of options for disposal of any surplus buildings
- Redecorate some areas of Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre including the main hall
- Change lunch club provision to free up some of the kitchen space for more community use. A basic kitchen facility will be in place for community group use
- Review room hire arrangements to free up more space for additional activities and to increase income
- Install library and customer self-serve terminals
- Explore car parking controls to improve availability for centre users



### Armadale Youth Centre

- Retain the centre and the ball court
- Make minor alterations to accommodate some community activities which currently take place at Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre



### Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre

- Explore options for disposal of the building including sale, transfer under the council's community asset transfer policy or clearance for potential housing development
- Work with groups to identify the best location for their needs

### Rushey Mead Library and Rushey Mead Recreation Centre

- Combine library services and community activities in one of the buildings
- Install library self-service equipment
- Explore options for disposal of the other building including sale or transfer under the council's community asset transfer policy



### Northfields Neighbourhood and Youth Centre

- Explore options for disposal of the building including sale or transfer under the council's community asset transfer policy
- Work with groups to identify the best location for their needs
- Explore alternative options for delivering youth sessions in the area, including street based sessions

### Hamilton Library & Learning Centre

- Redevelop the building as 'Hamilton Library and Community Centre'
- Improve access to the hall for community use



### Ocean Road Community Centre

- Explore options for disposal of the building including sale, demolition or transfer under the council's community asset transfer policy
- Work with groups to identify the best location for their needs

### Thurnby Lodge Youth & Community Centre

- Retain the youth and community centre
- Increase use of the youth and community spaces to accommodate some relocated activities
- Explore ways of reducing centre running costs with existing partners



**Note:** If this consultation process identifies extra opportunities, we may consider other council buildings in the north east area.





## Your views

Give your views online at [leicester.gov.uk/tns](http://leicester.gov.uk/tns)

OR fill out this form. You can also come to discuss the proposals at two events. Details are on the front of this leaflet.

1. Which neighbourhood services do you use? (please tick)

- Adult learning    Library    Room hire    Community activities  
(e.g. cooking, crafts, dance)
- Youth centre    None    Other (please specify) .....

2. Which centres do you use? (please tick)

- Rushey Mead Recreation Centre    Rushey Mead Library
- Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre    Belgrave Library
- Northfields Neighbourhood Centre (inc. Youth Centre)
- Hamilton Library and Learning Centre    Armadale Youth Centre
- Ocean Road Community Centre    Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre
- Thurnby Lodge Youth and Community Centre

3. What is your home post code? .....

4. How would these proposals benefit you?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

5. Is there anything in the proposal that would stop you from using neighbourhood services? If yes, please give the reason(s).

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

(continued on next page)





6. Any other comments

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

### Let us know about you

- 1. Age: ..... Prefer not to say
  
- 2. Gender: Male  Female  Prefer not to say
  
- 3. How would you describe your ethnic background?  
..... Prefer not to say
  
- 4. Do you consider yourself to have a disability or health condition?  
Yes  No  Prefer not to say

How does your disability or health condition affect your ability to access local services?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

5. Household type:
- Couple without children  Couple with children  Pensioner
- Single parent  Single, no children  Prefer not to say

Thank you for completing this monitoring form. The information you have provided will be kept in accordance with the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998 and will only be used for the purpose of monitoring. Your details will not be passed on to any other individual, organisation or group. Leicester City Council is the data controller for the information on this form for the purposes of the Data Protection Act.

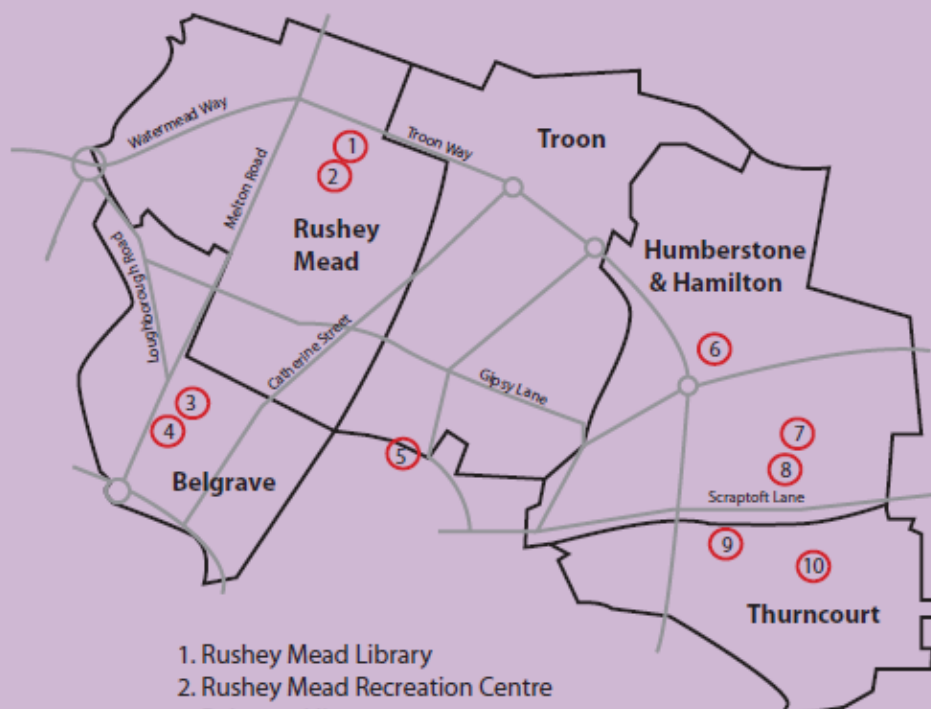
Thank you for giving us your views.

Please hand the form in to any Leicester City Council library, community or leisure centre, or post to:

Transforming Neighbourhood Services  
2nd Floor, Town Hall  
Town Hall Square  
Leicester LE1 9BG

**The closing date is 23 October 2016**

## Neighbourhood buildings (North east area)



1. Rushey Mead Library
2. Rushey Mead Recreation Centre
3. Belgrave Library
4. Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre
5. Northfields Neighbourhood Centre  
(including Youth Centre)
6. Hamilton Library & Learning Centre
7. Armadale Youth Centre
8. Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre
9. Ocean Road Community Centre
10. Thurnby Lodge Youth and Community Centre

This map shows approximate locations for illustrative purposes.

Produced by Leicester City Council, communications and marketing team, 09.16



