

Transforming Neighbourhood Services

West Area Engagement

Findings of the focus groups and public consultation
As at 13th August 2014

Prepared by:

- *City Development & Neighbourhoods*
- *Research and Intelligence*



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.*
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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 West 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 West area of the city between March and May 2014 to help develop draft proposals for the transformation of the area.
- Draft proposals were then 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 has been held prior to any decisions being made (**Transforming Neighbourhood Services: West area**)

The consultation period ran from 2nd July 2014 until 13th August 2014 and was carried out in two main parts:

- A series of meetings, by arrangement and request, with various 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 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.

The main messages drawn from the meetings held with groups are that:

- There was a general agreement with all of the groups that the services provided were more important than particular buildings
- 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 raised about costs of using buildings increasing, particularly if they are transferred to other organisations.

At the closure of the consultation on the 13th August 2014, a total of 97 completed form responses were received and people were asked to identify if any of the proposed changes would result in them no longer accessing services. The majority of responses were neutral or positive (meaning they would continue to access services). The main reasons stated for not continuing to access services were:

- A perception that the installation of self-service library facilities will replace the staff currently working at the library
- Greater distance to travel to access services, unwilling to relocate to another centre
- A perception that services will no longer be available if they were to relocate to a different centre

People were also asked for any other comments relating to the proposals. The suggestions drawn from

these responses are summarised as follows:

- Support for the continued use of Woodgate Resource Centre
 - Support for the investment in Fosse Centre, Westcotes Library
 - Comments raising concerns over consequences for existing groups should buildings be managed by a different organisation
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BACKGROUND

Transforming Neighbourhood Services – West 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 four service areas:

- Community Services
- Libraries
- Adult Skills & Learning
- Neighbourhood based customer services

It is recognised that other council services deliver services in neighbourhoods and although these are not in scope directly (i.e. Housing, Children's Services etc.), they have been involved in the development of this model where they form a part of the future delivery, for example, by sharing locations.

The scope of the West area includes the following buildings:

- Braunstone Oak Community Centre
- Brite Centre
- Cort Crescent Community Centre
- Fosse Centre
- Manor House Community Centre
- Newfoundpool Community Centre
- West End Neighbourhood Centre
- Winstanley Centre
- Westcotes Library
- Braunstone Grove Youth Centre
- Woodgate Resources Centre

CONSULTATION METHOD

Objectives and techniques

This consultation builds upon previous development and engagement work undertaken for the TNS programme with the goal to develop a model for the West area of the city. Overall, the following activities are planned and 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 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 carried out between 31st March 2014 and 16th May 2014 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 June 2014.
- Consultation on the draft model following this (**subject of this report**) in order to present a final draft for approval to implement to the City Mayor and Executive in August 2014 for a decision in September 2014

Details of the previous engagements between April – July and September and October 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
- Support for the retention and improvement of Southfields Library

A separate report is also available concerning the engagement period that ran from 31st March 2014 until 16th May 2014. The main outcomes of this engagement were as follows:

Focus Groups – key outcomes

- People attending the groups were protective of the buildings that they currently use, but there was a general acceptance that locality based services are more important than individual buildings
- Older people were more resistant to the relocation services should their preferred centre close
- Younger people were happy to relocate to a different building to access services
- Significant support for Libraries and the functions they perform
- Significant support for the activities held in community centres/ community buildings

Questionnaire Responses – key outcomes

- Part 1 – respondents' reasons for accessing services at particular buildings:
 - Ease of access, including long opening hours
 - Friendliness of staff
 - Convenience of location
 - Good facilities and / or good accessible book stock
 - Range of activities available
 - Free internet access

Appendix B – July – August 2014 Consultation Report

- Part 2 – respondents’ suggestions for reorganising neighbourhood services
 - Amalgamate services provided into fewer buildings, based on location and proximity of other sites
 - Transfer the ownership of the buildings to community groups
 - Better advertising to increase usage and income
 - Increase room hire charges and other charges
 - Allow rooms to be hired for private events
 - Ask for voluntary contributions from users of the sites

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

- A series of meetings with residents 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

The details of the meetings held are as follows:

Date	Time	Organisation / Stakeholders	Location
11 July	10am	Sew and Sews	Oak Centre
17 th July	6pm	Braunstone Boxing Club	Oak Centre
18 th July	1pm	Manor House	Manor House
23 rd July	2pm	Grove Stakeholders	Grove
24 th July	1pm	Knit and Natter	Brite Centre
28 th July	6.30-8pm	Consultation Event	Brite Centre
30 th July	1-3	Youth	Fosse
31 July	1-3	Youth	Fosse
31 July	1-2	Focus Group	Brite
1 st August	1pm	Youth Council representatives	Brite Centre
4 th August		Taragh Twirlers	Oak Centre
4 th -7 th August		Outreach consultation Western Park Braunstone Park Westcotes	
5th August	5pm	Braunstone Ward meeting	Oak Centre
12 th August		Braunstone Neighbourhood Management Board	St Peter’s Church

Alongside this a number of informal meetings have taken place with individual stakeholders and groups to discuss the proposals.

A leaflet containing details of the proposals and a ‘tear-off’ response form was used to gather opinions on the proposals. These were widely distributed in the area, and a total of 2,000 leaflets were circulated.

The form was also available on-line to receive comments from 2nd July 2014 to the 13th August 2014.

PUBLIC RESPONSE AND VIEWS EXPRESSED

Group Meetings

A series of meetings were held with a number of resident groups, stakeholder groups and community organisations who use the buildings in scope of this asset based review.

This is based upon feedback received and multiple requests for meetings from individual groups and associations in order to discuss the implications of the draft proposals and their acceptability.

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
- 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 raised about costs of using buildings increasing, particularly if they are transferred to other organisations.

There now follows some detailed points raised and discussed during individual meetings with groups, these are listed by which centre the groups currently use.

Manor House

A response to the consultation was provided as a result of the meeting held. This has been included in full at the end of this document following the consultation form.

Oak Centre

Sew and Sews

- Reluctant to move, but if have to, ensure good access for disabled users e.g. for mobility scooters
- Any relocation would need to be in the same area of Braunstone
- Ensure enough space for craftwork with storage available for sewing machines
- Concerned about cost of usage increasing
- Group would not have the capacity to take on managing the building

Boxing Club

- Concern over moving, as easy access to separate room whenever needed
- Any relocation, if needed, would need to be in Braunstone
- If no access to a dedicated room, would need a hydraulic boxing ring (costly) and pre-set locations to hang up punch bags
- Cost of hire would need to be no greater than now as finances of club very stretched to manage current commitment

Grove

- Preferred option is for a community group to take up running of the building on a lease
- If lease is offered, stated that would like some improvements to the building first
- If lease is offered, suggested that no adult activities transferred from Oak or Cort Crescent so could use the space for youth related offer that would complement what community group do
- Suggested that activities from Cort Crescent be transferred to The Oak and not to Grove

Brite Centre

Knit and Natter

- Ensure disabled access if need to change buildings
- Glad that Brite to continue
- Keep open public library space free for groups like this
- Help with using public computers would be appreciated for older people
- If Westcotes to be used by more groups, parking remains a problem around access. Could more parking be agreed for library use?

Stakeholder Meeting, 28th July 2014 Comments

- Groups require advice and support in understanding the requirements / expectations on them when entering into agreements to take on the management / running of buildings
- Focus on the conversation was around particulars of how a building would be transferred
- Concerns raised that costs of using buildings may increase if they are transferred to other organisations
- A desire to be included and communicated with more as the process continues

Ward Community Meeting, 5th August 2014

- No specific comments raised

Braunstone Neighbourhood Management Board, 12th August.

- Key message, please keep the Oak for north of the estate as well as Brite for South of the estate. Grove should be just for young people as not accepted as an adult venue.

Young People's Outreach Work

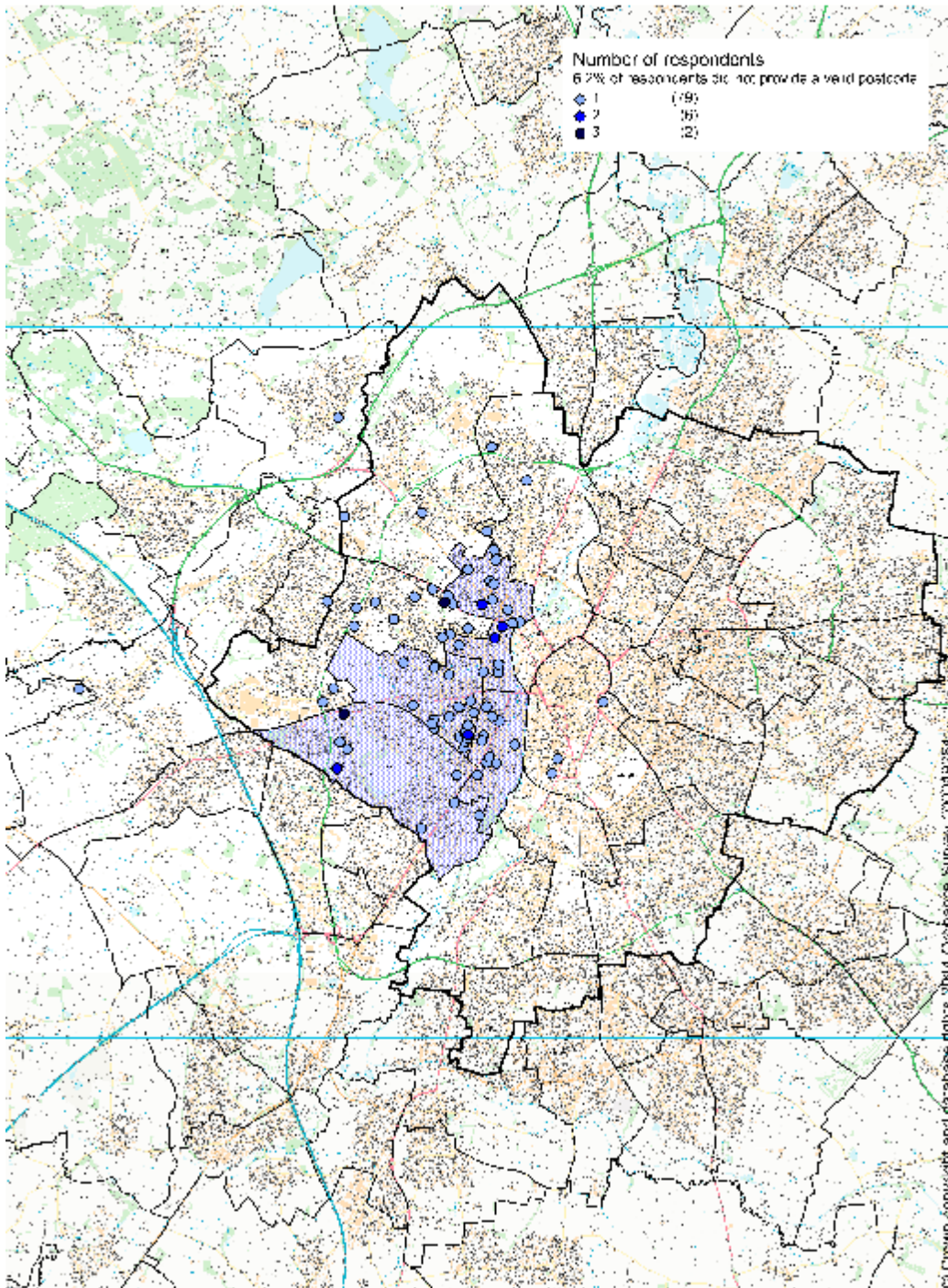
- Three Sessions occurred during the w/c 4th August in Braunstone Park and Rowley Fields, Western Park and Fosse Wards. Feedback from these sessions are included at the end of this document

Written and Online Comments and Responses

In total 97 responses were received up until the closing date of the consultation. The following map shows the locations of respondents where provided

A map of TNS - West area consultation respondents by home postcode

Shaded area represents West neighbourhood



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

Table 1.1: Number of respondents by ward, inc. neighbourhood for inner-city wards

Inner-city wards			Out of city wards	
Ward	Neighbourhood	Number of respondents	Ward	Number of respondents
Braunstone Park and Rowley Fields	West	11	Anstey	1
Fosse	West	19	Fairestone	1
Westcotes	West	10	Markfield Stanton and Fieldhead	2
Western Park	West	21	Newbold Verdon with Desford and Peckleton	1
Abbey	North West	4	Shepshed East	1
Beaumont Leys	North West	2		
Castle	Central	3		
New Parks	North West	15		

Table 1.2: Proportion of responses by neighbourhood

Ward	Number of respondents	Proportion of all respondents (%)
West	61	62.9
North West	21	21.6
Central	3	3.1
Not within city boundaries	6	6.2
No valid postcode provided	6	6.2
Total	97	100.0

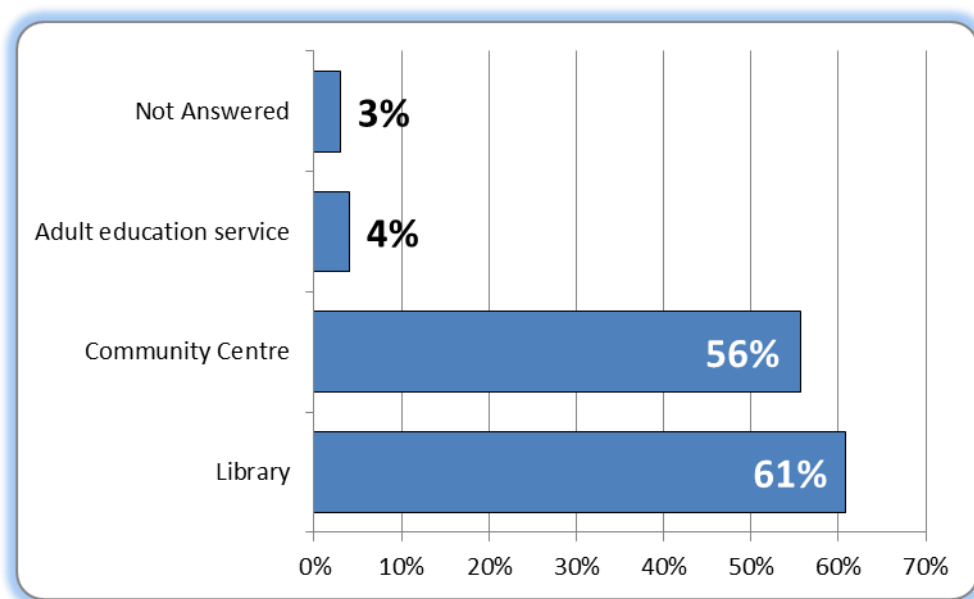
Views and comments

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. A summary of the messages and points received are:

- Support for the continued use of Woodgate Resources Centre
- Support for the investment in Westcotes Library and Fosse Library
- Concerns raised around the willingness to relocate to other centres due to increased travel etc.
- Concerns raised costs may increase and consequences for access could arise if centres were managed by organisations other than the council

Q.1. Do you currently use any of these services in the area? Library, Community Centre, Adult Education Services

A total of 94 respondents provided an answer to this question (97% of a total of 97 respondents). Respondents were allowed to make multiple choices for this question and the following chart shows the percentage that selected each option:

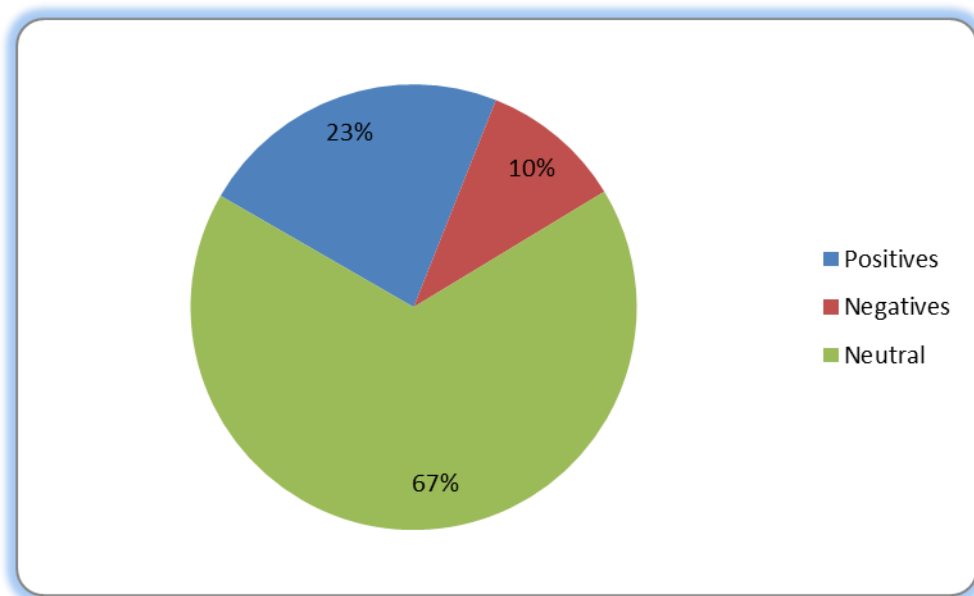


Q.2. What is your home postcode?

A total of 95 respondents provided an answer to this question (97% of a total of 97 respondents). The tables and map shown on the previous pages display the responses made split by wards and also a pictorial demonstration.

Q.3. Is there anything in the proposal that would stop you from using neighbourhood services? If yes, please give the reason(s).

A total of 44 respondents answered this question out of the total of 97 (45%). This was an open question and did not put any restrictions on the respondent as to how to answer. In a general sense, the following split of positive (would not stop) and negative (would stop) responses were received:



Specific detailed responses to this question are shown verbatim below:

"If the Oak Centre was to be put in private hands, hire rates would increase considerably which would make it unaffordable for small community organisations. As you know this community resource caters for all categories of users each category with their specified rate! My fear is that any private organisation taking over will have powers to inflate rates. Unless there is prior agreement between the Council and the new management of the centre to charge small community groups an affordable rate."

"I attend a yoga class at the centre. Any major changes would be problematic and disruptive."

"I teach yoga at the centre and would not be able to continue if it closed/use changed."

"You attend Woodgate Neighbourhood night class yoga."

"If Woodgate closed I would have to find another place to do yoga."

"1. Increased changes. 2. Having to travel great distance to access services. 3. Ending of services/adult classes I currently use."

"If Woodgate was to close would lose regular yoga class."

"I have come to the yoga session for 5+ years."

"I regularly attend the centre for yoga which I would not be able to attend if the changes would go ahead."

"Continuation of regular classes to support good health."

"No - but yes sarcastically the library service! 4pm 4th July to 7th July update till 10am Monday computers out of service until Friday 11th 1pm. 3hrs off a week! Who forgot to put the shilling in the meter? So couldn't use them!"

"If no group comes forward to run any centre there will not be any neighbourhood service to go to. To encourage groups to run centres charge peppercorn rents."

"Shorter library hours."

“No. Very please with Westcotes library. I think it is a great service for the local community and very pleasant staff. We don't want any change.”

“More books for reference would be better in the library rather than computers. For myself the library is a place of research with helpful people to aid in the search of materials.”

“My daughter has been using Westcotes library since she was 6 weeks old. All the staff know her by names and kindly let her stamp out her own books. She is now 6 and we come very fortnight because she loves the people who work there.”

“Yes, if it meant losing staff at Westcotes library at the expense of self-service library equipment.”

“I would not want to use self-service equipment. The people working at the library are always ready to help if I want a particular book. I use the library every week as reading is my hobby.”

“Installing self-service equipment will be very hard for little children like mine to operate and this will stop them from using the library.”

“I hope self-service equipment doesn't mean there will be no staff. Face-to-face contact is much better.”

“If you cut back too much there will be nothing left for the public, taxes always go up!?”

“Narborough road is a good location for the library and the arrangements work well at present. Any changes should enhance the IT provision while keeping the library intact.”

“No, I think it's good to develop the service. I only hope staff aren't being cut - they're always so helpful, makes it such a joy to use the service.”

“There is nothing in the proposal from stopping us from using the neighbourhood services.”

“Yes, if the centres develop an 'exclusive' agenda restricting any member of a local community/group from accessing services possible in each centre.”

“Distance, lack of disabled access, size of room/lack of storage space - all these things would affect the community group I attend.”

“I will not be able to go elsewhere as I cannot walk and my scooter will not go to another place and back.”

“No, as long as the library is accessible to the public at Mantle Rd Neighbourhood Centre (Fosse).”

“I find that the staff at Westcotes library are very helpful. Self-service library equipment is good but it will never replace a good librarian.”

“My wife and I use the Fosse centre and would continue to use as we do now.”

“Although I dislike the use of self-service equipment if there will still be a member of staff available I would continue to use the library.”

“None. Probably transport. At the moment, Mantel Rd is nearest and pleasant.”

“I use the Fosse Library on a weekly basis, the access I feel is adequate and would not affect my visits.”

“Self service kiosks in libraries can help but not to replace staff. Staff interventions are often useful.”

“If the library services were reduced significantly due to changes of services in the building.”

“Not to reduce counter space, it is need for all concerned.”

Q.4. Any other comments?

A total of 68 respondents answered this question out of the total of 97 (70%). This was an open question and did not put any restrictions on the respondent as to how to answer. Specific responses to this question are shown verbatim below:

“It is very good that the Fosse Neighbourhood Centre, and in particular the library, is to be kept. Better advertising of the facilities would increase use, Also the library opening hours are currently rather random and not good for people who work.”

“Don't see how tinkering like that is going to make huge differences or make the savings necessary?? Be honest and close a couple if necessary but how else is money being saved?”

“I am of the view that, should the proposed changes of handing the Oak Centre over to a private organisation go on, there should be a mechanism that allows small community organisations to continue using this valuable resource at an affordable price/rate. Otherwise our children, our elderly and generally marginalised people will miss out.”

“The lady had shown how enthusiastic they are in developing their music talent. It's fantastic to see them improve to becoming good musicians. I would be happy and please to have my daughter carry on learning the piano in this community centre. This centre provides a privilege for children to develop their talents in music. I hope for it to carry on providing this privilege.”

“My daughter loves coming to music here. She is now going onto grade 3. I have seen a great improvement. The facility is great for what we need.”

“Great and affordable lessons, great teacher.”

“We are very glad to have Woodgate Resource Centre near by as both of my daughters love their piano lessons there and we would not have otherwise been able to pay the normal price for piano lessons. Woodgate have made things very easy for us.”

“My child has music lessons at Woodgate Resources Centre. A valuable centre that is as it offers lessons which are affordable. I definitely will carry on sending my child there.”

“Very friendly with students and family. Very useful for people who want to learn music.”

“William really enjoys his music lessons.”

“The library is always busy and staff are often helping people who are less able to search for jobs, access books, and improve themselves. More self-service machines would be great, but you should still keep a few staff around.”

“I use this centre as it is on a bus route convenient for me which means I'm independent and not relying on a lift. I attend the yoga class. There are not many other yoga classes that are at a convenient time and on a bus route convenient for me.”

“The presence of Woodgate Resources Centre is very important to local residents. I am glad that it is not changing, as I would not be able to access yoga without it and my mother and her elderly friends rely on its groups.”

“1. Need to retain community facilities locally - easy access and affordability. 2. Services relevant and

appropriate for local communities. Thank you."

"This centre is an excellent place for me as I do not have to use public transport. It's a ten minute walk from home."

"Easy to get to, on a good bus route. Nice size room and kitchen."

"Woodgate Resource Centre is local and easy to walk to. Very good amenities."

"Woodgate Resources Centre - Handy on a bus route and not far from home and local. Good amenities."

"Woodgate Resource Centre - Easy walk to centre and good bus route, nice size room and kitchen."

"Woodgate Resource Centre - Easy walk to centre. Our group (co-op friendship) have been meeting here for six years."

"I have been meeting here for 6 years at Woodgate Resource Centre. There isn't much parking facilities. Luckily I have disabled badge."

"Woodgate Resource Centre - very easy to get to and within walking distance."

"I've been coming here for very many years for three times a week and would sadly miss coming to Woodgate."

"The local community, old and young, need the centre to continue with all the ongoing activities."

"This centre is required for young people and old."

"I've been coming quite a while. I would miss coming for the company and exchange."

"I am a 93 year old woman and I very much enjoy all the activities I attend here."

"Old and young require this centre to keep going."

"Woodgate centre has good range of resources."

"Woodgate centre provides good meals."

"Woodgate centre next to bus stop."

"I find it unbelievable that "The Manor" has not been included in the overall proposal and is being treated individually, the most expensive building in the area. Due to the lack of disable access the upper floor is not used. The lower floor 80% in use, overall the building roughly 40% used. Whilst I appreciate that this is a community project it would appear that a few are working for a few, but for what reason are they treated differently? The building is on the edge of the area. The Brite Centre is more central and once again under used. At least "Brite" is easily accessible, and lies near to bus routs 16, 18, 19, 104 and is on 1 floor - enough said?"

"Brite very good. Also has car parking."

"Westcotes library is used by a lot of people of all age groups, the staff are very helpful and for some people they are only people they speak to all day. Books are a lot of people's life line, we would be very sorry to lose any of the services this library gives us. Please take note. Thank you."

"The library has always been a place of social interaction and provides an important service run by the 'people' for the people. Technology is great but I feel that the layout is sufficient for the needs of the locals."

"I use Westcotes library on Sunday to look for employment and contact others for action/needs following week. I find it easier to come here in afternoon than in city."

"Concerned about self service at Westcotes as having staff on hand is great when help needed or 'undesirables' need asking to leave."

"The library was opened in 1889 and has survived two world wars and the Thatcher years. Education and freedom go hand in hand, cut back on the former and you lose the latter."

"Westcotes library have a very warm, friendly and dedicated staff. There is always a nice atmosphere and it is a pleasure to go there and know you can rely on their helpful advice in finding a particular book or with IT issues. I hope that they will not be replaced by some cruel, machines that would destroy the 'personal touch'."

"I understand the need to use buildings to their full potential, but don't get rid of the human touch. I'm in my seventies now and appreciate the help I receive from the staff."

"I hope the library at Fosse neighbourhood centre will remain open. Also PLEASE keep the arts centre open - the painting and ceramics course are very much enjoyed and appreciated."

"I and my 2 children (6 + 10 years old) use Westcotes library all the time. It is walking distance from home. If we had to get in the car to drive further we would be much less likely to go."

"Libraries and local centres are hugely important. I use Westcotes library frequently for myself and my grandson, Fosse centre for gramps etc. It's important these services are maintained. Self-service book issue is fine as long as staff are available for support."

"I use Westcotes library three times a week. This for me is very easy access, as I do not have any transport to travel too far."

"How can counter space at Westcotes be reduced? Staff need that space for the smooth running of the library - if anything it should be increased. Would not be please if by introducing self-serving library equipment that it would cause redundancies to staff."

"Westcotes provides excellent service for children. Any improvement would benefit all of the community."

"I like coming here as it's very friendly and also to read."

"More quiet areas in the library would be appreciated by a good number of people who wish to concentrate on their studies."

"We are currently proposing to take over the running of the New Found Pool Centre and make it in Leicester's Creative Innovation Centre where it will host a performing arts school, an accredited qualifications company, community outreach programmes and a business start up company as well as working closely with the entire Leicester and shire community. Thinking outside of the box and making collaborations to enhance community living and the local economy."

"Westcotes library is an invaluable source of children's books. We regularly borrow books from the excellent selection and the staff are all very helpful. I hope this building and the service can be preserved for use by us as our child grows and for others to use in the future."

"Any model has to be an inclusive one, it has to enable all regardless of origin, religion or sexual orientation, to use and feel safe using services of each centre."

"If all services are moved to the grove then a large part of Braunstone north will not have access to services (ease of access)."

"Friday is the only place I go on my own as my scooter won't go far I have no way to see anyone if I don't go on a Friday."

"LETTER dated 120714 from WOODGATE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION LTD, Woodgate Resources Centre.

I am writing on behalf of the Woodgate Residents Association Management Committee to make the following comments on the Transforming Neighbourhood Services West Area Consultation.

Broadly speaking we support the proposals. We are particularly please the Woodgate Resources Centre has "no proposed change" although we do not know whether that means we are funded for three years or one. Until last last couple of years we have been funded for three years at a time, but due to various consultation exercise over the last two years it has only been one year funding. We hope the "no proposed change" does mean a three year package as this gives us a chance for long-term planning including getting grants from other organisations which, in some cases, can bring money into the city.

Regarding the Fosse Centre we again are in support of the oroposals. We would hope that the library may have longer opening hours. This may allow Sure Start to also open longer hours.

Regarding the Newfoundpool Community Centre (and other centres) we support the idea of "community ownership" but it would still need adequate funding. As you are aware the

Woodgate Resources Centre is run by the Woodgate Residents Association so if we can be of help in giving advice we will be prepared to to so.

We hope these comments are of help.

Chair

WOODGATE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION LTD.

Woodgate Resource Centre"

"Self-service equipment plus the availability of a librarian(s) would be the way forward."

"Yes, city council should stop shutting down libraries. Why is it some libraries can still get hard back new books and some can't?"

"We use the Fosse centre every week for art. It is convenient to access and within easy reach of where we live. There is a very lively coffee morning taking place in the library once a month which we enjoy."

"It would be a shame to close this library. It has given me great pleasure and enjoyment."

"With the discussion group and book group very popular, I feel more could be done to encourage the general public to visit. A coffee, tea facility with a charge could be introduced."

"Braunstone geography means that Braunstone in two halves due to Braunstone parks. The part that is the side of Gooding Avenue appears to be covered by council controlled Brite centre. The other side that is Court Crescent side could be if possible covered by council controlled Oak centre."

"Living in the Cort Crescent half of Braunstone, one community centre is needed and if the council would back it, the the Oak centre would be the perfect venue for the community groups."

"Model successful interaction between staff and users (of different cultures) at Westcotes library. All 3

services are of importance in community integration and in improving communication between individuals and groups."

"Please don't cut the library services and staff - so important for children and the community. I understand the Manor House is being used by Playhut as an afterschool/breakfast club - this should help reduce the running costs."

"Please don't reduce the hours at Westcotes library - especially the Sunday opening. I am busy all other days and love to go the library on this day - the staff are very helpful."

"We use the West end neighbourhood centre and feel it is rather cramped. An extension/another room would be useful."

"Nice to see you are keeping all 3 library buildings especially Westcotes library."

Other comments received

A petition opposing the closure of the Braunstone Oak Centre was received during the consultation period. The petition has 366 valid signatories that have provided an address in the City where they live, work or study.

The wording of the petition is as follows:

"We are opposing the Council's proposal to close the Oak Centre. We access this centre for many things, such as sports for our kids in winter, summer activities, homework sessions, maths tuition and many other community meetings."

This is being considered in line with the Council's Petition Scheme (Revised and adopted by Council on 19 September 2013).

CONCLUSIONS

The outcomes of this engagement have been used to help develop draft proposals for transformation of services in the West area of the city.

The method of consultation using focus groups has been very well received by the community and staff. The key messages to be taken forward from this engagement period are:

- 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 is good support for elements of the proposals, improvements to Westcotes Library (although concerns raised that introducing self-service equipment has been interpreted as meaning reduction in staff), retention of Fosse Library and the Woodgate Resources Centre
- Concerns raised about the potential to conclude with no local community facility in the north area of Braunstone
- Concerns raised around the consequences for existing groups should centres be managed by outside organisations

Lessons Learned from the Engagement

- 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 reduced response rate to the previous engagement in the West area of the city. This could be due to the quality of the earlier engagement period and having taken on board all messages received
- The overall approach of involving 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

Manor House Consultation reply July 2014

Progress So Far with The Manor House Project.

Over the past four years the committee has made progress with its target of increasing the use of the Manor House. The inclusion of both the Polish and Russian language groups over the weekends has ensured that user numbers have been sustained. There has been a steady increase in young families coming to our stay and play sessions. The food bank, organised by the Mosaic Church have increased its numbers from 15 to 40 each fortnight, which again attracts people to the centre. The senior citizens groups (The luncheon Club and the art group) have maintained steady numbers but the Guru Nanak group has seen declining numbers after the personalisation agenda has taken its toll. The engagement officer is working hard to attract new members to all these groups. We have sent out three leaflets every year to advertise all our groups and would like to see this extend to a community newspaper. The committee has worked hard as a united team to ensure that continues and in spite of the resignation of Janet Burrows and some turbulence with treasurers this has now stabilised and we continue to enjoy working together.

The Building and Consultation over Savings

With massive support from our councillors Sarah Russell and Andy Connelly we have made excellent progress with making our building much more attractive. We have redecorated the main hall and the small hall to a high standard, the first floor kitchenette has been painted and tidied. The computer suite is well equipped and has its own internet connection. All machines are fully integrated and a printer and copier have been installed. The first floor of the Art and Craft centre has been transformed with a kitchen unit, repainting and decorating. We owe many thanks to the councils property department for their help with sorting out our damp problem. The final fitting of a new carpet will make the room lettable in September, when the enlarged St Mary's School will need it for their children's meals. We have replaced damaged windows in the main hall. Our committee continues to want the building to be in pristine condition for our clients. We have contracts to get the stairs and the top corridor repainted in September. Progress with improving the outside space have been very slow, the seating and planters contract being cancelled when Ground Works went into liquidation. In the future we would like to re tarmac the outside space to ensure that the uneven surface does not leave the council vulnerable to legal claims for trips etc. Mike Richardson was made aware that we would like to attract section 106 monies in order to install high quality equipment for young children. We have invited Adey Edge to our committee to get advice to see if this will be possible in the light of house building to take place on the local "Fair Charm" Estate .

Plans for the Future

These are difficult financial times for everyone working for the city council. Cuts of 28% last year and 30% this year are alarming when our communities are growing in size and complexity. The need to have thriving neighbourhood centres who can support communities in difficulties is more evident each week as cuts bite hard to the poorest in our communities. The partnership of volunteers and council can meet these needs with both being committed to helping the community. We feel

there are still many things to be done. A community newspaper, better provision for young teenagers, more use of the old pottery room and the art room. We welcome more use of the first floor offices with the police taking over one room, improvement of the outside space and more specialist groups in the building, better advertising for our core groups are challenges that can be met by more volunteers and careful thought and planning.

Finally

We would very much like to thank all the officers of the council who have worked with us as we have made slow but good progress as a committee. In the future we will also investigate the possibility of having Charitable status and taking more responsibility in gaining a community asset.

The Manor House Community Association.

Report on Young People's Outreach Consultation for TNS West Area

3 Sessions occurred during the w/c 4th August in Braunstone Park and Rowley Fields, Western Park and Fosse Wards. Hotspots for young people's usage were identified and targeted by 2 youth workers and (for 2 sessions) 1 young people's council member.

Tuesday 5th August – Western Park (Skate Park) and Braunstone Park (nr Gooding Avenue) – 3.30 - 5.30pm

1. 3 males and 2 females (Western Park Skaters) 13-15 yrs – LE3 1BB, LE3 9LF, LE3 1, LE3 6HE, LE3 6FH
 - Mostly used Grove in the past
 - If people who are there now keep running it it would be good (i.e. Streetvibe)
 - If the Council turned BRITE into an (indoor) skatepark they would make loads of money
 - They should bring services together in one building (where there are several in close distance)
 - Libraries should get more computers and Tablets for people to borrow and use
 - Not big 'Book fans' preferred more active services / facilities for sports etc

2. 2 females 15yrs – LE31QN, LE3 1QX
 - Used Library and Grove
 - If another organisation takes over the Grove it must be for young people
 - Charging would be OK if reasonable
 - If other adult groups use the building it would be OK if separate from young people's activities (same building but different spaces and activities)
 - If services run needed to be better??????

3. Family 2 females 15 and 12yrs, 2 males 4yrs & 13 yrs plus Mum – LE3 1JS
 - Used Grove previously (females and older male)
 - "If adult groups were using Grove at same time we wouldn't"
 - Doesn't matter who runs the building as long as we could do the same things and no charge
 - If charging was necessary, it must be good value if we were to consider it.
 - There should be some buildings especially / specifically for young people because adults just moan at us!
 - Like to be able to use the outdoor sports facilities at the Grove outside of opening times – free access to these is important

Thursday 7th August – Braunstone Park (BRITE centre to Police station) – 12 – 2pm

4. Mum with 1 young female approx. 14yrs and 2 small males 3-6yrs – LE 3 1PS
 - Uses Library and community centre
 - As long as services are the same or better it would be fine
 - Accepting that things may change and charges may need to be made
 - Happy that Libraries are open at weekends etc as a busy working mum

5. Mum with 2 females under 10yrs – LE3 5EB
 - If another company takes on the buildings and increases the cost of using the building (i.e. session / activity charges) it would put people off
 - Has no big problem with adults and young people's groups in building together as long as safeguarded.

Appendix B – July – August 2014 Consultation Report

6. 1 male 12 yrs – LE 3 1QN
 - Uses Braunstone Grove
 - Would pay if charged are not excessive (if in the region of 1 pound per session)
 - Wouldn't mind adults using same space so long as the different age groups are not using the same space at the same time.
7. 2 males 13& 14yrs 1 female 11yrs – LE3 1EA & LE3 1GT
 - If the organisation who takes over Grove stopped free use of sports outside facilities it would be bad
 - If adults use centre it must be at different times e.g. school times
8. 5 males and 2 females (Skate park bikers) 14-16yrs plus 1 female 42yrs – LE3 3DL, LE3 1EX, LE3 5PQ
 - like to use the facilities for free, not so much the services / groups / sessions so much
 - Doesn't matter who runs them as long as it's free and no more rules (i.e. they want it left as it is!)
 - Just want to be able to play football on the pitches when free
 - Want more things to do and facilities not less and costly
9. 1 males early 20s – LE3
 - Uses library at the Brite centre
 - I'll be fine with these changes, nothing would stop me using these services
 - Not about these proposals, but the parks in Braunstone are brilliant – caters for all ages

Thursday 7th August – Fosse Rally, Fosse Recreation ground, Fosse NC and vicinity

10. 6 males 7, 11, 12 & 13yrs – outside Fosse NC
 - Other adults using the same space at same time would be a problem
11. 4 females 13-15yrs – LE3 1AB
 - Other agencies running the centres is OK
 - Adult groups in at the same time as young people is not good but different times is fine
 - Library changes are fine too
12. Female 17yrs & male 18yrs – LE3 5ER
 - Use community centre
 - OK for adults and young people together
 - Not bothered who runs it
 - Important to have more access to IT
 - Advertising of services is more important than who runs it
13. 1 mum and male 17yrs – LE3 2JS
 - Don't use many facilities
 - Lack of information about what happens and services provided which stops use
 - If there was a building nearby that could be used instead that would be fine (to move groups / services)
 - If adult and young people were to have mixed use it must be safeguarded but OK
14. 2 females 13yrs – LE3 9DS
 - Use community centre

Appendix B – July – August 2014 Consultation Report

- If transferred to other service it won't stop me using the service, so long as it is a reasonable amount
 - If other services come in it might be a positive e.g. parent and toddler groups would benefit families that need childcare
15. 3 females 11yrs and 13yrs - LE3 9AD, LE3 5HH, LE3 2GP
- Used BRITE and Fosse library / CC
 - Would not like it if there were no library staff because they help young people get the books and info they need
 - If community ownership changed / cancelled young people's provision it would be bad
 - Not important to have dedicated young people's space
 - Feel important to keep services / groups / activities nearby (i.e. not have to travel too far)
16. 1 male 17yrs – LE3 9NP
- Uses Library
 - No problem with proposals 'as long as everyone can still use them'
 - Would want strict guidelines and monitoring (of organisations taking over building) by Leics City Council
 - Shouldn't matter if young people and adults use the building at same times as everyone has a right to use the facilities.

Consultation Form

Transforming Neighbourhood Services



West area consultation

Background

In April 2013, Leicester City Council announced a programme to reorganise neighbourhood services across the city. This includes libraries, community centres, adult learning and local customer service points.

Significant cuts in government funding mean that we cannot continue to run services as we do now. But before drawing up any proposals, we wanted to talk to local communities to find out what they wanted from their services in future.

We are considering six areas of the city in turn. The west area of Leicester is the second one we have looked at: Braunstone and Rowley Fields, Fosse, Westcotes, and Western Park wards.

In spring 2014, we held focus groups across the west area; there was also a questionnaire (paper and online). In total over 500 people gave their views. You can read a summary of the responses online at consultations.leicester.gov.uk/we_asked_you_said or pick up a copy in your library or community centre.

What is happening now

We have listened to all of the views that were put forward. We also collected information about council buildings in the area to find out what they are used for, running costs and how many people use them.

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

We are holding an event to discuss the proposals on 28 July, 6.30-8pm at the BRITE Centre. Please come along, or give your views online or fill out the form on this leaflet.



Proposed changes

Westcotes Library

- Install self-service library equipment
- Make minor alterations inside to improve the use of space, increase IT services and reduce counter space



BRITE Centre

- Move the STAR office into the centre
- Improvements to the building are already being carried out through New Deal funding



Braunstone Grove

- Explore transfer of the building to community ownership to allow continued use
- If no suitable group found, create flexible community space on the ground and first floors



Braunstone Oak Centre

- Explore transfer of the building to community ownership to allow continued use
- If groups need to move, work with them to identify the best location for their needs
- Children's services wish to move the existing early years provision to Braunstone Children's Centre, allowing the service to be extended to two year olds



Cort Crescent Community Centre

- Make the building available under the council's asset transfer policy, to community groups first
- If groups need to move, work with them to identify the best location for their needs



Winstanley Community Centre

- Make building available for asset transfer to community groups in the first instance. The current group has shown interest.

(continued on next page)

Proposed changes (continued)

Fosse Centre

- Improve access to the building and consider how to maximise community space
- Identify space to allow other services to move in
- This is a Grade II listed building: detailed design work is required with planning and conservation officers

Newfoundpool Community Centre

- Explore possible transfer of the building to community ownership to allow continued use
- If groups need to move, work with them to identify the best location for their needs

West End Neighbourhood Centre

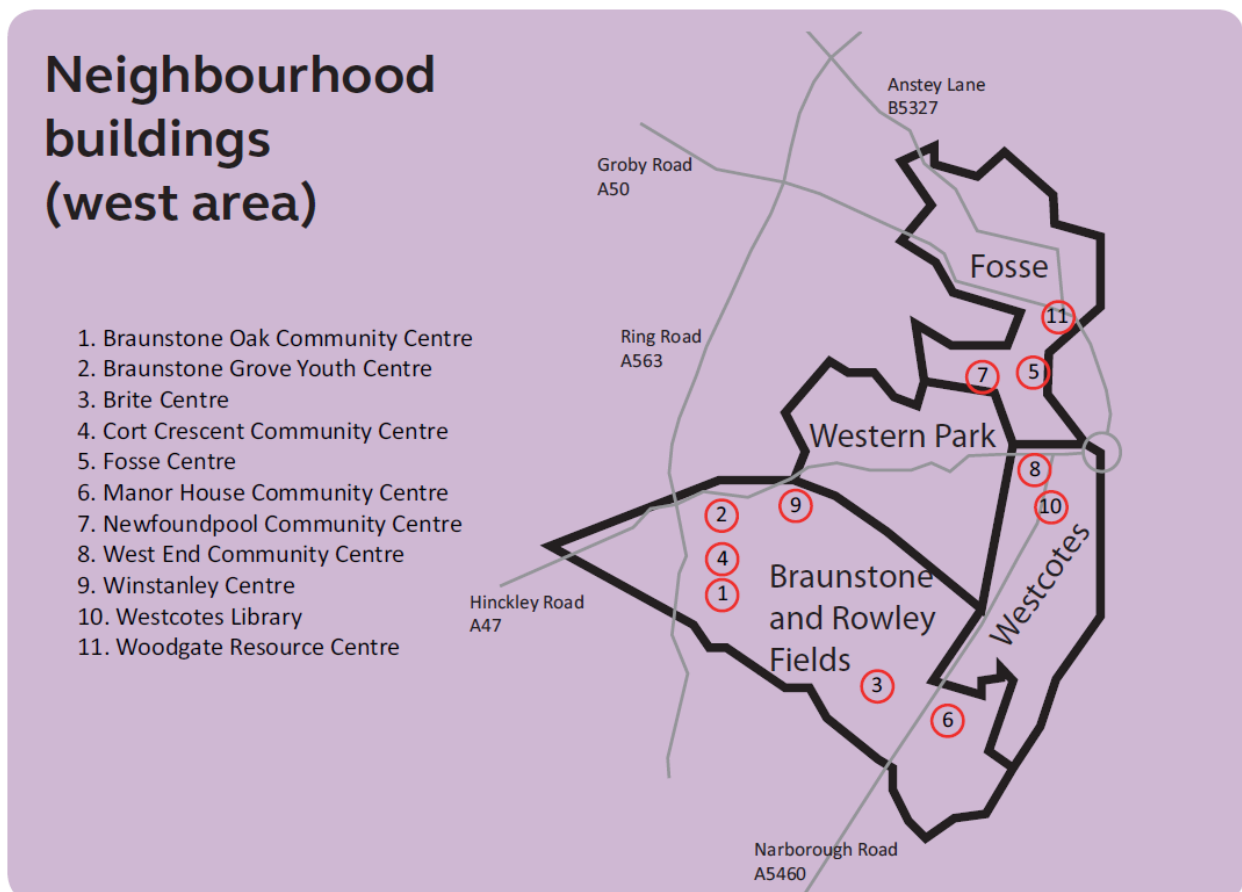
- This building has already transferred to Leicestershire Centre for Integrated Living (LCIL) under a long-term lease from 1 April 2014

Woodgate Resource Centre

- No proposed changes

Manor House Community Centre

- Explore how to reduce the centre's running costs



Your views



Give your views online at leicester.gov.uk/tns

OR

Fill out this form

You can also come to discuss the proposals at an event at the BRITE Centre on 28 July 6.30 - 8pm.

1. Do you currently use any of these services in the area? (Please circle)

Library Community centre Adult education service

2. What is your home post code?

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

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4. Any other comments?

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Thank you for giving us your views.

Please hand this 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 8 August 2014.

