

## Transformation Plan Consultation Results – August 2019

### Introduction

The current Transformation Programme runs from 2016/2017 to 2019/2020 and covers the period of the Government's four-year settlement. The current Transformation Programme has helped the Council reduce its annual budget by over £2.5m with initiatives including relocation of the Department for Work and Pensions and other partners, Parish Council/Boston Town Area Committee support and sharing services.

There are new proposals for a refresh of the Transformation Programme to ensure the Council meets the challenge of the projected budgeted position of the next four years, this and the need to make net budget savings of almost £1m were set out in the Cabinet Report in July 2020 and public consultation ran from July 2019.

### Methodology

The Transformation Programme is arranged within four main themes, and the consultations was set out to reflect these themes: -

- Commercialisation
- Service Modernisation
- Income Generation
- Policy Changes

Public consultation ran from 17<sup>th</sup> July to 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2019. The survey was placed online and on the council's social media sites, a paper copy was also available from the Municipal Buildings. 16 completed surveys were received.

### Full Consultation Results

**Q. Having read the Transformation Programme and any associated papers, do you agree that these are the areas the council should be looking to transform in order to save money? (for example, if you feel that any areas should not be on the list, please explain why)**

11 comments were received: -

1	I agree
2	Agree
3	Yes
4	Cut down on expenses and councillor numbers
5	If the details were put into language the ordinary man in the street understand I might be able to give a proper reply
6	Why are there 2 amounts the same for housing and regulatory services and regulatory service review
7	Usually when a council 'looks' at saving money it costs more to 'look' and longer than is actually saved
8	None listed
9	Not all

\*All comments (either from survey or social media) appear as received.

10	Healthy living should be always encouraged. Proposal lis listing to reduce the related fund is not wise
11	Brown bins shouldn't be charged for emptying as compost is required for containers and flower beds within the borough.

**Q. Are there any other areas that you think should be added?**

11 comments were received: -

1	Clean up the disgusting town
2	Members and associated costs
3	Member services/expenses
4	Review councillors' expenses and unnecessary 'freebies'
5	Stop publishing the County News
6	review the facilities provided at the pool - in light of costs profile
7	Reduce payments to Lincoln C.C. reserves
8	Check out the payments for rents from/ to social landlords when there is no cap.
9	The Park
10	There should be a £10 a month voluntary contribution agreement for every rental property managed by the big rental companies in the town. The boom profits made from transient workers has not been shared with the Authority. The Authority pick up the tab for the rubbish and decay, but the Landlords and Labour Bosses take all the money for themselves
11	Stop excessive pay rises. Stop creating jobs that aren't advertised.

***Theme 1 – Commercialisation***

**Q. Are there any services that you think the council should consider looking at selling? What do you see as the pros and cons of the council becoming more commercialised?**

12 comments were received: -

1	How does selling off anything assist in the long term
2	Depends who will make the most money out of it. Those successful i the 'sales' will be trying to get their money bakc plus a bit more so there will be little difference seen
3	More fines for fly tipping. Compulsory purchase of long term empty properties for renovation & either sell or rent out.
4	It would appear from the outside that Government departments spend way over the odds for contracts, services and supplies. Change your suppliers like businesses have to remain competitive.
5	The Council should sell the grass cutting service more effectively. Being under cut by private companies from outside the area is obscene
6	Chatge landlords of empty shops monthly to tidy areas of doorways and clean windows. Charge private car parks for slip trips and falls surveys 3 monthly
7	Extra administrative officers and possible lack of quality control – cons
8	The council is there to serve. The budgeting issues are now superseding the service and welfare of locals. Any privatisation in part or full will mean reduced service. This is not done. If we keep going at this rate, we will have no control over our own local bodies and the sense of belonging will go too. I am against any such commercialisation. Scrap the councillors. That is a good idea.

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9	1. Getting better value for money than direct employees - how can effective assurance be evidenced? Direct employees have a direct reason to be efficient, effective loyal, responsive, responsible in comparisons to contracted workers where the owner is solely seeking a profit from the contract. The workers have no incentives and are often paid the absolute minimum (maybe even zero hour contracts to achieve the ,lowest payroll cost to the contracted owner) so the standard of work can be inferior. (See 3 below) 2. Getting the quality of work from subcontracted services - especially when those tendering will be placing the lowest bids that they can to get the contracts, leaving the contract subject to be poorly delivered. This has happened nationally with high profile failures like G4 Olympic and prison service contracts, there are many more! 3. difficulty to assure the public and members - in proper and effective monitoring of the performance / work by sub-contractors unless the monitor is skilled "in the art" of the contracted service. Extra costs and personnel to achieve satisfactory monitoring and performance to targets.
10	Sell. The Council Offices and build a more modern one out of town
11	Contractor's are going to cost more than to employ someone directly. If you sell the services then residents should have a council tax cut because we would be getting less for our money.
12	The Council should bring in a compulsory clean-up bond with all Landlords having a portfolio of properties comprising more than 1 property. The tenant must lodge that bond with the Council as integral to their rental agreement with the Landlord. When the property is vacated, a Council inspector should review the property and surrounding neighbourhood to ensure the immediate area is being left rubbish and flytipping free. This inspection service fee should be subtracted from the bond, and if necessary the bond forfeited if the area is not left clean. This may help stop the blight of flytipping as tenants swap over, and would allow the Council to raise funds from inspections and from the boom in transient workers. This should be agreed with the cooperation of the Landlords. They should help their local Authority and the wider public, not just taking the profits without putting something back.

## **Theme 2 – Service Modernisation**

### **Q. What do you see as the pros and cons to the council undertaking service reviews?**

13 comments were received: -

1	No pros and many many cons we the electorate are being swamped by tax and additional costs
2	If they act on the reviews which show poor service and improve them - ok. Otherwise a waste of time
3	It will reduce the number of staff as they are the biggest cost. However, services should be as lean & efficient as possible, using all the technology available to them to increase efficiencies. Having being a customer some services are much more switched on to modern working (and give better customer service) than others that still seem to work in the dark ages because that's the way they've always done It!
4	The review will take too long and cost a fortune. It's not rocket science for a manager to know if something is working properly, effectively, efficiently and economically. What do you pay your managers for?
5	The actual effort and resources taken to "review" the services could be better spent delivering service.
6	Its a good thing, all services need to check they are value for money
7	None money outlay for little return
8	Pro - services remain but potential cost benefits and greater efficiency

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9	Again, as far as I know the services are stretched to the max. Any more pressure and it will fall apart. A spring can only be pushed to some extent. Then it will either snap or bounce off.
10	A. Will the performance be at least equal the existing service? If not, in what way will it change B. Who will be charged with monitoring and comparing to the potential? C. how will the performance be effectively and realistically monitored? D. Will the service be benchmarked 1. Against the (previous) existing service 2. Against other services. Potential and Performance in other Councils /Districts. - in Lincolnshire and from outside Lincolnshire? E. Where is the expectation of the potential and performance being evaluated and both who and how will it be set (by) in the proposed minimum cost contract on offer? .
11	Reviews are identical each year
12	Reviews are a good idea
13	Services will shrink.

### **Theme 3 – Income Generation**

#### **Q. What do you see as the pros and cons of the council looking at more options for generating income?**

14 comments were received: -

1	Lobby the government we the public are saturated with costs and cannot afford ant more
2	In other words you will be putting prices up. Why not just come out and say it?
3	Are the staff trained and conversant in running commercialised services? Traditionally council staff dont have business background as evidenced by the lack of customer service skills in some departments (NOT the front desk staff) Pros are that if they are an extension of existing successful services there will be benefits from the economies of scale.
4	This word "looking" keeps cropping up. Your managers should know this information. Review your staff instead.
5	Introduction of additional risk when taking on extra burdens.
6	If they invested in places like the swimming pool rather than just the gym this would bring more people in as the changing rooms and pool area are well over due a refurbishment! Changes to the time table are going to lose the council money as people with children are going to be turned away at certain times which is one way of stopping people ever coming back. Well done council!!!
7	Pros - may make more money. Cons - people may go elsewhere for services or stop using them.
8	Waste prices increase will lead to more flytipping, more cost to council to clean up
9	Con - extra fees for green waste will encourage fly tipping, not everyone has access to a trailer to go to the Council recycling centre, nor the extra cash to pay for the service, especially as brown bins attracted an initial fee. Con - increase in number of unscrupulous white van tippers who con the elderly in paying for waste removal Pro - crematorium cost increase only if improved parking, no penalty for slightly longer service than allocated, and live web links to be introduced. The latter important as many friends and relatives are often worldwide.
10	Garden waste, commercial waste, rates, parking charges, etc can be increased. Crematorium should be left alone. It's not an event to exploit money from.
11	Garden waste : Seeking excessive higher charges (above the nett cost of the service) will contribute to increasing - fly tipping! As garden waste it is biodegradable people will not see any issues. When one considers that all collections are now

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	fortnightly - many people do not fill a bin every week .... many other blue and green bins are not filled - even every fortnight - for single home occupancy and flats.... and the "dustbin" service is again a council tax essential and paid for by all already. The brown bin was a cashcow introduction / extension. The public are aware that there is a mass confidence trick going on with so-called segregated bin collections and much of the rubbish is just dumped together and / or incinerated. The export of UK rubbish (recycled in particular) to other countries has stopped - they have ceased taking so-called recycled rubbish e.g. India / China (who were simply burying it in the ground anyway NOT burning or recycling). There is an ignored, sustainable moral commercial issue to just pass on and dump UK rubbish to another country that is wrong. Big business exploited it and made vast profits from it until the other countries refused. There is a massive, so-called and very profitable "recyclable" waste business that has been exploited for years. So-called sustainable, recycled material is being stockpiled at huge levels as companies fail in attempts to dispose or it. Better to burn it all in high temperature, low emission units and use the energy sustainably to local needs! It's hypocrisy to declare any other.... when the Drax Power station is fed on carbon fuels - millions of tonnes of wood chippings being imported from USA; shipped across the Atlantic in tar (bunker fuel) powered worst polluting CO2 fuel with NO carbon tax charges whatsoever- to UK port, then more carbon use, Diesel bulk goods trains delivering across west to east to the Drax plant. Crematorium These fees (in comparisons to church burials) are already high and increasing them to seek higher profits is morally wrong. The upkeep of the used energy costs (benchmarked) and essential maintenance of the units and buildings is one thing but a council cremation service is an essential need in every district and must not be exploited.. Commercial waste These charges should be in line, only, with benchmarking waste charges in other districts / regions / rural counties. They are a necessary business cost and business (as with rates) should be welcomed, treated fairly, and not exploited.
12	Our Town should be advertised more widely
13	Fly tipping of garden waste has increased since charges began on brown bin. It would make sense to not charge for the emptying as the cost to clean up probably would be more than the charge.
14	More flytipping of waste

**Q. Please detail the impact that raising the fees and charges on these services will have on you**

11 comments were received: -

1	Will have to choose eat or heat Council tax and other council fees now take up over 66% of my pension
2	Don't know
3	Obviously it will impact my pocket
4	Increasing garden waste collection fees will increase fly tipping. Increasing crematorium costs is debilitating at what is a stressful and difficult time. You don't need anymore worries including financial. If the council doesn't remain competitive in the collection of commercial waste you'll lose customers. That equals loss of income generation not increase
5	I would have to think about the affordability of continuing with these services i.e. garden waste
6	Increase in flytipping reports ultimately landing at the feet of the council
7	Getting less and less for our money.
8	I will not be able to afford my council tax

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9	I don't use the commercial or brown bin service. I have a friend who uses the brown bin but is not prepared to pay more. They will stop it and make alternative arrangements if the charges go up.
10	It will have impact but it can be reasoned. Rates, parking, Garden waste etc are not basic services and can be used to generate income. Any basic need (like general tax) should not be put up as it only creates half hardship for the less able.
11	Garden waste price increase - increased carbon footprint due to many visits to recycling centre Cremation- if technological upgrades then we would use Boston and not have to travel to nearer Spalding

**Q. Are there any other services that you feel the council should look at when considering raising fees and charges?**

10 comments were received: -

1	No we cannot pay any more
2	Yes - charge staff, including councillors and officers for parking at municipal Buildings. Almost every one else in town - including nurses, doctors and staff at Pilgrim - have to pay to work. Why not those working in West Street?
3	Fly tipping fines.
4	It should be looking in house at how finance and spending is managed. For example, if statements weren't sent out on the day your commercial waste in live was due for payment you'd save a fortune on paper, stamps, envelopes and time. Use common sense. I'm all for saving the environment but recycled paper costs a lot more than non-recycled. Should we be savings pennies or the environment? Yes the environment in austere times but we're not in those times at the moment.
5	Enviroment charge on lorries and vans coming into town center
6	If the market place carparking bays were returned to how they were over 10 year ago, thus almost tripling the current facility and making it safer for pedestrians and drivers as they would both know where to walk and drive, fees could be reduced for short stay and therefore increase footfall in the town and the more numerous parking fees would increase overall income. Many people only need to "pop into " town and the market place once offered this facility. However, this lack of historical foresight may make this impossible now due to a lack of major market place players.
7	Alcohol license should be made periodic. Every year need renewal and at a cost. This will generate income and keep better control of the raft of alcohol shops around town.
8	No.
9	Bringing back emptying the brown bin for free. Recycle more plastics
10	There should be a property/neighbourhood inspection service for transient workers/tenants. This should be agreed with the Landlords in Boston. There should be mandatory provision (with Landlord cooperation) in every short term tenancy agreement involving transient workers and their families. There should be fees passed on to the tenants as they revolve through the town.

### Theme 4 – Policy Changes

#### Q. What do you see as the pros and cons of the council making policy changes of this type?

12 comments were received: -

1	You will find out at next election
2	If you get rid of these will our council tax go down? No, I didn't think so. Your costs go down, everyone else's goes upSee above
3	If these are not services that the council MUST provide then they should be halted during these times of austerity. The council needs to be innovative. Perhaps the community should come together through voluntary services. The settled migrant population should be expected to contribute as much as the existing population to tackle those who have little respect for our town. . Landlords of multiple occupancy houses should be held responsible for the rubbish generated, anti social behaviour, etc. They pocket high rents taking money out of the local economy and do not give back but indeed create bigger burdens on the public purse because of their lack of control.
4	If you transfer litter bin responsibility to parish councils it just means an increase in our council tax by parish precept.
5	People will consider their Council Tax monies are being spent on folly projects not the essentials. The expectation of being a Council that wastes money may be realised.
6	its a shame that the council may not be able to support these type of things, but if money is tight something has to be cut
7	Would rather cut numbers of councillors to just 20, as like [removed identifiable information] paying out good money for no return
8	Con - if PCs are responsible for collections then the rate payer will still have to pay an increase, unless the BC pays the PCs which will defeat the purpose Con - out of term activities are essential to keep children off the streets but perhaps token charges could be made?
9	Not sure if its good or bad. Need to know exact list. Holiday activity should continue. Litter bins is a must, if parish councils fail, it poses more hazardous situations. It is not wise
10	We pay council tax to the borough and they have paid employees. Parishes do not. They rely on volunteers. Parish councils struggle to get volunteers now. There are enough pressures on parishes. We already have too highly paid Council employees Make all pension contributory and reduce the paid pension contributions from our taxes. Pension take a huge part of council taxes.
11	Children of poor families will suffer without activities
12	Flytipping will soar

#### Q. Please detail the impact that policy changes have on you

8 comments were received: -

1	Poorer and poorer every year on
2	Probably not a great deal. Parish councils will pass the cost onto council tax.
3	Increased council tax.
4	Funding for children activites is important for intergration. Council wasted lump sum given for this
5	We would still have to pay for litter collections whoever is responsible.

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6	Flytipping Watch will be very busy and so will the Council
7	Reduced income to live on. We are already taxed high enough for local services.
8	Need to know these changes are to feel the impact

### **Social Media Comments**

There were also a number of comments received via social media.

The comments and also any replies are detailed below: -

#### **Facebook comments**

- Careful tho very pointed questions!
  - BBC response – Please read the proposals in the link and complete the survey for your suggestion to be taken into account.
- Cannot do, link take you to B&&££&\*& page!
- This page wont open for me to see the survey
  - BBC response – May be worth trying a different web browser as works OK this end. Or try this direct link .....
  - Works fine for me thanks
  - That one works thank you
- Sorry but I don't agree with paying anymore for garden bins to be emptied. Who agrees we have to pay for bins in the first place then they went up in price
- Lol... you could not make it up... oh open ye floodgates
- Why even bother asking when we all know you will do whichever makes the most money, like council tax for example, how about instead of writing off peoples ct debts over the last 15 years you actually get the money back owed I bet that could amount to a huge amount of money.
- More of should complain to the government
- Is it true Brown bin collection charges are going up next term?
  - Be cheaper soon to see your own brown bin stuff.
- Turn off street lights in Pets carpark during day time really useless energy/waste
- Stop fiddling expenses and drawing more money for meetings they don't attend and stop making up committees with ever more generous allowances
- Get rid of all the councillors. They make the most ridiculous decision that they make cost the tax payer a fortune in hundreds of millions.
- When I click the link to read the detailed proposals it goes to the agenda for the Cabinet meeting on 17/07/2019. Are the detailed proposal in there somewhere? I can see the 'refresh' and the Appendix but never seem to say much.

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- Get rid of a couple of councillors, job done
- Up the cost of the bins again
- Another point charge all councillors and employees parking fees like ulht
- Web page wont open
- Lol. .. you couldn't make it up... oh open ye floodgates
- What about all the hundreds of houses that have been built in the town? 100% increase in your funding from those and 0% maintenance other than the bins being emptied.
- Careful tho very pointed questions!
- I would like to know just how much is spent on pensions every year. Also why some positions get paid more than the prime minister a year.
- I think you should get rid of the Traffic wardens there is a waste of money, as there's no need to come to Boston Town.

#### Twitter comments

- Cut top executive pay in half cut out 'fake' jobs like diversity and equality mangers etc [removed identifiable information]