

Social Impact of Population Change in Boston Task and Finish Group  
Notes of Evidence-Gathering Meeting of 30<sup>th</sup> May 2012 (6.30 pm)

Present:

Councillors Paul Kenny (Chairman), Paul Gleeson (Vice-Chairman), Richard Austin, Elliott Fountain, Mike Gilbert, Richard Leggott, Paul Mould and Dr Samra [*Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Judith Skinner*]

In attendance: Councillor Peter Bedford

Officers: Phil Drury, Andy Fisher, Andrew Malkin and Janette Collier

Witnesses giving evidence:

- City of Lincoln Council (CoLC): Councillor Brent Charlesworth, portfolio holder for Social Inclusion and Community Cohesion, and Paul Carrick, Neighbourhood Manager
- East Lindsey District Council (ELDC): Councillor Sandra Harrison, Portfolio Holder for Communities
- East Midlands Councils (EMC): Sarah Short, HR and Development Manager
- Lincolnshire County Council (LCC): Councillor Peter Robinson, Executive Member and representative on the East Midlands Councils - EM Strategic Migration Board, and Councillor Andrea Jenkyns, Executive Support Councillor for Community Safety and Social Cohesion
- North Kesteven District Council (NKDC): Councillor Mike Gallagher, Deputy Leader and chairman of the NK Community Safety Partnership.
- South Holland District Council (SHDC): Councillor Nick Worth, Deputy Leader and portfolio holder for Community Development and Anti-social behaviour.
- West Lindsey District Council (WLDC): Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan and Rachel North, Director of Community & Localism

Questions from members of the public:

*Why aren't councils pressuring the government more on the effects migration is having on our towns?*

BBC: We have done and we are doing a lot of work. Nearly all parties of Boston Borough Council put their names to a letter to our MP about the problems. We have been pressuring Government since 2002 for better settlements because we know Government is not recognising the funding pressures on Boston. If the Council did more it could be counter-productive; what it has been doing is within the law and is what is expected of a local authority.

All Boston Borough Councillors agree that they want to see more funding for the Lincolnshire local authorities because of the rural settlements of Lincolnshire; it has never been fair and transparent and there needs to be more money put into services.

*More funding has been received and the Alchemy Project was set up and the Centre for Good Relations came in, but did it solve problems?*

BBC: This is a huge and complex issue, but in some areas appropriate force could be brought to bear on the Government, e.g. licensing – we can try and claw powers back regarding numbers of licensed premises. But other issues are more complex, e.g. the transfer of responsibility as people travel into the country – this country is not getting its fair share, but that is at the European level of legislation. We can debate matters locally and put them to the Government, but very little can be changed in the short-term. In the long-term it is a possibility.

*You say you are doing stuff, but then Staples was granted planning permission yesterday.....when we have high unemployment in the town, we're shipping more people in.*

BBC: There is very little we can do to stop them coming in; they are entitled to do so; we are in a European Community. If planning and licensing applications meet the criteria it is difficult to turn them down. This is a borough council not a European superstate!

SH: In South Holland, we have been pressurising Government since 2005/06 regarding community cohesion. The 'dynamics of migrant labour' in 2007 was a report on community cohesion for the Community Cohesion Commission about solutions and jointly with BBC we contacted Professor Tomlins about the issues. The biggest is we have is getting up to date information on the Census, which will be 2013; we need that hard evidence to lobby for more funding.

LCC: It is a bad time to ask for more funding. We have had to cut 800 staff in one year and save millions. The official figure for unemployment in Boston is 3.5%, which is high but not higher than other Lincolnshire districts.

CoLC: The issue is not on the same scale in Lincoln. Boston has many more migrant workers. It is my Administration's second year in power and the problems we are tackling are generally caused by the recession. In terms of migrant workers, we're doing our best to separate out the needs of those who want to live and work here and become a part of the community and those who come and go.

*Would extra funding solve problems or just create a bigger problem?*

CoLC: It is our responsibility, and with quite small budgets, to manage and integrate people and ensure that resources are equally and reasonably distributed to everyone. We can't solve European problems; we can't re-draft European policies. We deal with problems on the ground and try to develop the local economy, facilities and so on. Major Issues need to be addressed to the European Parliament. We concentrate on local investment for the future for when the recession is over.

LCC: Boston can't be all that bad! It must be a lot better than Poland, Latvia and Lithuania if they want to come and live here; it's a splendid town.

*What do the councils think they can do to help ease the strain that EU migration is having on services in our areas?*

BBC: There is a definite need for money for services, because there is more demand on them. Investment for the future is very important. We have to lobby Europe through our representatives.

CoLC: In Lincoln there is a mixed pattern. Immigration has distinct economic advantages as well as (arguably) some social disadvantages. Our Neighbourhood Managers could talk at length about what we're doing for the benefit of the whole community. The picture is mixed in Lincoln. We would like a lot more money, but what we need to do is ensure decisions regarding migrant workers are tackled when and where appropriate.

SHDC: South Holland is a heavy farming area and we would seriously struggle without migrant workers. There isn't a strain on services at the moment in South Holland. There is a strain on the Citizens' Advice Bureau because it is being used more by local people due to the recession. The council has put considerably more money into it in order that it can deal with some matters the council normally deals with. The major issue in South Holland is drinking in the street and anti-social behaviour; the Council has a very small team of three to deal with it, both in relation to migrant workers and indigenous people.

BBC: The unregulated labour market allows migrant workers to come to the area. We could look at controlling some aspects affected, e.g. housing / HMOs, by introducing regulations and supporting the Gangmasters' Licensing Authority etc and extending this model into other areas of employment, such as care and other agency-type work. We need to ensure people are aware of resources.

*Who did the jobs before the migrant workers?*

SHDC: We had to have Irish workers and there was a void when they went back and it was gradually filled by migrant workers and people from all over. For decades we had a regular influx to the area, e.g. there were a lot of Polish people after World War II and they worked in the fields. It is not an unusual situation; we are part of a global society.

BBC: We relied heavily on illegal labour before. It is difficult to employ and de-employ people for seasonal work. We used young people a lot more before, but there has been a change in attitude about the low wages etc. We need to look at attitudes and encourage young people to be more positive about the work. We don't rely as much or at all on illegal labour now; the people employed are entitled to be here. Before, people were bussed in from Sheffield, Manchester and Mansfield in the early hours.

Our customers, i.e. the supermarkets, now make many more different requests, e.g. weighing and pricing. Before, we used transitional labour, but it has moved on. The seasonal workers scheme has increased from 5,500 to 20,500. Gangmasters have multiplied. There has been an enormous change in labour and the way of doing things in this area; you no longer see merchants doing business in the back streets; buyers would not tolerate that now; it has to be transparent and we have to use people who employ the labour.

LCC: We used seasonal labour from Yorkshire etc, but now they are working all year irrespective of the seasons so they are not going back home.

*Why are the councils not doing more to combat hmos?*

BBC: The Corporate and Community Committee is looking at licensing HMOs. We've had help from Oxford County Council on this and we're looking at it as part of the housing review.

We take this very seriously. We need to regulate markets; HMOs are a perfect example of this and we're looking into implementing a scheme.

CoLC: We brought in a new raft of regulations re HMOs. It is a big problem, ensuring HMOs are properly refurbished and managed etc. We are licensing all HMOs.

ELDC: We have 750 HMOs, mostly on the coast for tourist staff in the winter. Most are licensed and we keep a careful eye on them and rely on local intelligence.

BBC: We've looked at models across the country; several have adopted the full licensing model and we're exploring it. But how do you get full cost recovery?

CoLC: We charge £410. In the very centre of the city there are issues to do with students rather than migrant workers. There are between 13-14,000 students in total and we have more than 2,000 HMOs.

SHDC: We have 26 licensed properties that are three-story with five or more residents and we charge £375.

*We all know Boston is underfunded for the amount of people who actually live here so why hasn't this problem been rectified?*

BBC: That's for Westminster. We could cut costs or increase income and we have been trying. It has not been rectified because we can't get the Government to recognise numbers, which are used as the basis for funding.

Looking at the Lincolnshire Observatory, our population is 61,000, but we realise that is not realistic; it is probably around 70,000. We're hoping the census information will provide the numbers. The people carrying out the census knew that not everyone was being recorded, but we will try to get a realistic figure from the information. We know that the figures the health service deal with are different and those used when developing education.

EMC: Underestimating is quite common across the East Midlands, resulting in disproportionate settlements on various issues. The census is a way of addressing this, but the population is transient; we can measure people coming in but not going out; we have been looking at this for a long time. We have used colleagues to lobby Government to address this, e.g. the Local Government Association's Migration Task Group. Work was done two years ago on this and it was useful, but it has gone quiet now.

ELDC: The population is a problem, but it is due to holiday sites. The population goes from 20,000 to 200,000 in the summer. Van sites don't come into this so the figures are not realistic and they are occupied by older people, so there are implications for the health services.

NKDC: We campaigned about the 'missing millions' 2-3 years ago and put a lot into it, but it didn't do any good, so the Government *is* aware of the problems.

*So, until the figures are nailed down, services won't get the funding they're entitled to?*

BBC: Yes. The information needs to be shared. Most migrants work through agencies and gangmasters so we could get figures from them as well as the number of NI numbers applied for.

EMC: The information on NI numbers is readily available.

*So why don't you know the figures?*

BBC: Because of 'churn'; we could get the number of NI numbers, but how many are still used? People go back. It's the same with the number of GP registrations. It is not an exact science; there's a base line and then guesswork.

We're looking at migration not immigration; some are staying but most are not.

*Do you the council and the Leader still have the opinion that migration isn't a problem in Boston?*

BBC: I did not say that it wasn't a problem; I said it was something that we had got to work with and that we are working together.

I have been a Councillor for 21 years and seen migration grow and have seen the problems; so I have never had that opinion.

*We see more and more resources going into schools that have large numbers of migrant children, in fact we had figures given at the task & finish meeting on the 26<sup>th</sup> April from Adrian Reed Head of Haven High Federation, a thousand pounds for every migrant child taken on roll and a sum of over 1.1 Million has been put in for extra resources so far. Primary schools are over subscribed and in some cases to the detriment of local indigenous children, we have cases of children having to go to schools out of area in Taxis. Schools are having to build more class rooms or put in portable ones, there is talk of having to build a new school in Boston. The massive growth in population in and around the Boston area is mainly due to immigration. All this is costing a considerable amount of money. Money that could have been used to enhance the lives of others. My question is where does this money come from?? And could The Education Authority not do more to highlight to the government the problems and cost that this immigration population is causing ??*

LCC: I am not actively involved in that area, but I have a statement here to read:

There is not a shortage of school places in Boston. The recent media coverage regarding a child in Kirton being offered a place 10 miles away was inaccurate. We had already addressed this issue last week, prior to them running the story, by working with Kirton Primary School so that in the next round of offers (May 22<sup>nd</sup>) a place can be offered to all local children in the area within a reasonable distance of where they live.

In total the LA have allocated £4.8m of basic need funding to the Boston area for the current capital programme (2011-2013). That is almost 25% of the total £20m basic need requirement identified for the county – having received only £14.6m of basic need funding from Government (the rest is made up of condition funding which is not ring fenced).

There is pressure on school places in many urban areas across the country, particularly in the primary sector – in Lincolnshire this is mainly in the Skegness, Lincoln, Louth, Bourne, Boston and Spalding areas. This is due to an increase in primary intakes as a result of a rise in the birth rate in recent years. We have successfully planned sufficient school places to ensure that 93% of Lincolnshire children have been offered a place at their 1<sup>st</sup> preference school. This is the same as last year, despite an increase of over 500 applications. In Boston 88% have been offered places at 1<sup>st</sup> preference schools, and all children will be offered a place within a reasonable distance of where they live.

Pupil forecasting for school place planning is based on GP registrations which in recent years has been accurate to within 1%. However, this year we have seen unexpected additional pressure from EU migrant families in addition to increased birth rates and this has not fully been picked up by the GP data that feeds the projections. With late applications as well we have had some challenges but have been able to address these.

We have and continue to make investment in school place planning in Boston. 134 additional Reception places are being provided in the Boston area for this September – Boston Hawthorn Tree and Boston West are being expanded from 280 to 420 at each school (building work to be completed for September 2012). Boston Park is being expanded from 210 to 315 for September 2013 (and they are also over offering for this September using temporary accommodation to make 60 places available on a PAN of 30). Boston St Nics have a mobile for this September for an additional intake of 30 (taking 60 on a PAN of 30). Swineshead are also in the capital programme for expansion by next September (but are able to over offer for this September) to add 30 places and reduce some KS2 class sizes down from 36. And just last week it was agreed with Kirton that through some minor capital works they would take an extra intake of 30 to take 90 on a PAN of 60 for this September. We are looking at further options in the Boston area should they be needed, and look forward to hearing the outcome of the free school application from a local provider, which will be announced by the Secretary of State this summer (it would be a 1FE 30 place school from September 2013). With limited capital, high birth rates and pressure from EU migrants, meeting demand for sufficiency will continue to be a challenge across many of our communities.

BBC: The County Council has responsibility for providing education for children and has to look at the need of the area working on the population of school children.

NKDC: Migration is not so much a problem but people who work in London are living in the area. The new Localism Bill will introduce a community infrastructure levy which will go on to new housing estates to contribute towards doctors etc; it will be done centrally and some will go towards new schools; this will happen in Boston too.

*Why can't costs be referred back to migrant workers too?*

BBC: Boston doesn't have a large number of new housing estates; migrant workers tend to live in existing accommodation. The differential economies across Europe mean that people from countries with lower wages come to us for higher wages; there is nothing to stop them, the drive is economic and there is work for them to do. In the long-term there are social implications. We need to start looking at the transfer of liability from one state to another.

There was migrant funding for Lincolnshire and it was taken from migrant workers' tax.

EMC: From the £6.3m for the East Midlands there was just over £1m for Lincolnshire and a number of projects were put in place.

LCC: One of the negatives with respect to the EU was doing away with the regional structure.

*We know of children four years old travelling up to 10 miles.*

LCC: Please give me the details and the County Council will look into it.

BBC: If there is hard evidence you have Councillor Robinson's commitment that he'll take the matter back to the County Council. I e-mailed the Leader who contacted the County Council Leader regarding surplus cases and there has been an announcement about it since.

*We regularly hear from the powers that be and mentioned in earlier meetings of this group we are living in a low academic achieving area. In light of that statement and after witnessing the failings at St. Bede's when English became the third spoken language in a school and no considerations been made of the fact of that situation regarding the results tables that was still expected to be achieved leading to a very sad demise and a strange takeover from a school not as high achieving as the Giles school which had a very good case to support the school and retain its identity which appeared was never given a fair chance.*

LCC: The County Council was advised on this and went into it carefully and found that Haven High was the best option.

The curriculum was more in line with St. Bede's, e.g. it catered more for BTECs.

BBC: This was not specifically linked to migration. Going from St. Mary's to St. Bede's a very high percentage passed the 11-plus. There was pressure on the school as many of the children of migrants are Catholic. Young children catch up rapidly, but these were teenaged children. I got involved with the take-over and I believed the curriculum at Giles was not complementary with the curriculum at St. Bede's; Haven High was the 'best fit'. It was very complicated and the County Council went into it in detail.

*Are we likely to see further demise amongst our local schools when the intake of many primary schools is over 50% from amongst the various migrant communities putting massive burden upon resources and leading to far less time being spent with British children than what previously would have been the case. Surely the time has come where contributions should be taken from the migrant parents to assist on the extra cost incurred and to assist with translation etc.*

BBC: The idea of taking a percentage from migrant parents relates to liability transfer for resources to go into a collective 'pot'; this is way beyond the remit of the Borough Council or the County Council – it can be suggested to Government who would then have to take it up with the EU.

NKDC: South Kesteven gets lots of families from London, which means more work for the County Council, as they have to top up for schools and academies. There will be a lot of changes with respect to the Localism Bill.

*Primary school intake will have a knock-on effect on secondary schools; the problem won't disappear.*

BBC: We will look at the provision of secondary schools as well as primary. This is a golden opportunity to develop Lincolnshire so that it is fit for purpose.

*Instead of paying thousands to the schools for migrant children, wouldn't it be better to build new schools, mainly for the migrant children?*

CoLC: Not all these circumstances relate to Lincoln. I am governor of one of the Church of England Schools and, to be fair to the County Council, the school has received £1m to build extra classrooms. There are more Travellers in this school than migrant workers. We have extra resources for language provision as Lincoln attracts people from all over the world because of the university and colleges. Eastern European children apparently learn English quickly and work hard. These are children from families who want to live and work here. My school does exchange visits with Poland. We have extensive programmes developing in language teaching. There is a disproportionate number of migrant children in the poorer areas of the city, but we do get support from the County Council. Also district councils are working together on an increasing number of practical issues.

BBC: Yes, that's the reason for tonight's meeting; it is better to work as a collective. Boston is often referred to as a 'low achieving' area and yet we have heard that children are achieving very well; we can't take things at face value.

WLDC: The importance of investment in education at every level can't be over-estimated. There are positives and challenges. Education is key to the community; investment in schools and colleges is the way to integrate people. We do not want to see a 'migrant school'; children must integrate.

LCC: Yes, a special school would segregate not integrate. It would be harder to learn the language and would have a long-term effect.

*We pay significant council tax to the County Council for poor return; why are you not doing more to keep funds in Boston? We are being sadly let down by the Boston County Councillors who's attendance at Council meetings is questionable.*

LCC: We have to be realistic. The real work is done in Committees such as this and we do attend such meetings. We carried out scrutiny into children's services and economic scrutiny last year. It is a falsehood to say Boston has not had funding; the borough has had a lot of investment, e.g. for the waterways.

SHDC: There is a standard funding formula across the country and a block allocation for each school; no favour is shown to a district; if there are more children, a district will receive more funding.

#### Questions from Members

*Do you think that your authority is committed to a policy of encouraging diversity; If yes, do you believe this is compatible with long term social cohesion, protecting the rights of others and integration? Please explain your answer.*

WLDC: It is a very difficult balancing act, but we are fair and equitable and appreciate diversity. We don't have problems regarding migrant workers; there is a very small population and its impact is generally positive. We have issues in relation to travellers/gypsies, sexuality and rural/urban issues. We are not in charge; we are part of the jigsaw and can't determine matters, but we support the parish councils and community organisations – the work they do on the ground actually does change things in terms of community cohesion, e.g. local events, such as the Jubilee celebrations, and we support community activity.

We want opportunities to be open to all. That is a strong theme – “open to all”, encompassing people with mental health problems, the elderly, everyone.

SHDC: We record the equality and diversity implications for every report and have an equality and diversity champion for South Holland. The impacts of long-term community cohesion is about developing a culture within the council and passing this on to all partners and infiltrating the wider community, which is a long-term policy of encouraging community cohesion. Family events encourage this.

*Do you have a community plan that incorporates social cohesion issues?*

CoLC: The CoLC Strategic and Delivery Plans put all this into context. *[Copies were provided for the Task and Finish Group.]* If you create the conditions for economic development everyone benefits. We have found that putting more money, effort and

partnership working into specific projects that involve minority communities has been successful. We have had migrant workers, Polish and Lithuanian, create projects for local children and take part in neighbourhood boards. We encourage manageable, feasible projects targeted to specific objectives with measurable outcomes, for example "Stand Up Speak Up", a project based on Lincoln City Football Club with local children playing football, working, co-operating and living together. Furthermore, on the 16<sup>th</sup> July next we're bringing together a lot of local partners to see what they're doing, how their efforts can dovetail into the Council's work and refine our social cohesion policy.

People who want to live, work, contribute, pay taxes and act responsibly in Lincoln have my support. Some come and go, which may cause practical problems. Dealing with these is basically an issue of resources.

As to migration, we have figures to show the trend of those who go back to Poland and other European countries. We are told that the new country for migrants is Germany, where there are more opportunities and money to be earned. . I

If you want a greater account of our work or want to visit us, then please do.

*Has promoting separate community events on a national basis, e.g. the Polish event, caused any backlash?*

CoLC: Not that I'm aware of in the Lincoln context. The issues for us in the inner city wards are resource-based, primarily jobs and housing. Housing, originally bought for families, is now occupied by students and migrant workers, resulting in more HMOs. There is thus a turnover of people which has effects on local communities.

There are areas of the city centre where we are concerned about the breakdown of community. People complain they don't know their neighbours and it causes anxiety. We are trying to allay fears and deal with the issues. We try to make sure that HMOs do not deteriorate. Yes, there is resentment and there are problems, some drink related. As to migrant communities, we have recruited Polish people to help deal with them where and when necessary.

We have problems with students too. It is unfair to label migrant workers exclusively.

ELDC: We have a community plan in which specific cohesion issues are identified, for example anti-social behaviour and inter-generational activities. We have something called 'street talking' which is a market stall for various departments and partnership organisations to talk to the public and it has been very successful.

LCC: There is a presentation on benefits at Melton Mowbray. The changes to the benefits system will significantly alter things for people at the lower end and in HMOs; that has to be taken into account.

EMC: I could write a book on community cohesion in the East Midlands! All localities are different and it's difficult to generalise. Cities and rural areas are different, but there are some similarities, for example in one city, the children go to school in the country not the city. Solutions to problems relating to migration are often about small

projects and using grass roots community groups to bring people together in mutual understanding and then seeing how the project can be replicated. People are getting real results and a lot is being done; much of it from goodwill and without local authorities necessarily being aware of it. A lot of good work is being done by local authorities too. There are many challenges to be faced from the welfare reform; we don't know the details yet, but further changes will impact on those already disadvantaged.

*What changes have you seen within your area since 2004 and the arrival of the new European Communities? What are the advantages and disadvantages to your area?*

WLDC: We have small numbers around Gainsborough; many have gone back or integrated. There are insignificant numbers across the rest of West Lindsey.

SHDC: We had significant numbers of foreign nationals moving in. About 4-5 years ago there were around 10,000, but people come and go. Half were migrants and the rest immigrants. My feeling is: where we've got to change (and it's different to Boston) a lot of people worked in South Holland and lived in Boston, but that's changed and families have arrived. This is in the Spalding area, but only a little in Holbeach. We're awaiting the results of the census.

ELDC: We've not seen very much change. We've had a handful of eastern Europeans accessing services in the housing department in the last few years. They are mostly employed by Butlin's.

NKDC: There are very few migrant workers in North Kesteven. There are some in Nocton, for the daffodils, and probably 500 in the whole district.

CoLC: We get comments at the neighbourhood boards. Some accept migrant workers and some profit from them. Young single men can be a cause for concern, not families. We're quite happy about the efforts of families who want to live here and respect their hard work and co-operation.

There are community problems in the West end of Lincoln, where the university campus is. When a property comes up for sale it is often bought and converted for student residence i.e. becomes a HIMO, and then there may be problems with refuse bins, parking and noise. We get far more complaints about students than migrant workers.

*What is the spread of migration in the East Midlands?*

EMC: Boston and South Holland have probably the highest migration in the rural areas. It is quite high in Northamptonshire. It is quite high in the cities, mainly immigrants from the Indian sub-continent and asylum seekers. There are teams dealing with problems relating to eastern European migration; housing, quality of properties and the management of private sector housing.

*What about the new strategy with respect to European migration?*

EMC: We're still using both strategies, as is the Home Office and especially the UK Border Agency. The east of England has mostly migrant workers, not asylum seekers. The West Midlands have mainly asylum seekers and refugees. The East Midlands – Leicester, Nottingham and Derby – has some of both, but there are also massive rural areas with migrant workers. There are also Roma populations too, which give rise to different problems, for example, they have no direct community leaders.

LCC: The speed of change has been an issue. In 1997, the Chinese were the largest ethnic minority in Lincolnshire. Now it is the Latvians and Lithuanians, even more than the Polish. Lincoln has a more international feel, which is a good thing, it has an ambiance that fits well with Lincoln University, which itself boosts the city.

BBC: There is a larger similarity between problems with students and migrant groups – who are often young men – but we don't have a university to approach to deal with them; there is no one place we can go to.

*What do you do? Best Practice? What works?*

SHDC: We have a migrant worker forum at Long Sutton and have English language classes to promote basic English communication. We've built up a network of people over the years. Latvians, Lithuanians and Polish people help in the forum meetings. We use libraries as a lot of migrant workers go to them to use the computers to communicate with home. We have a book about migration produced in different languages and it's placed in libraries, which is not new. The issues are coming about through a small number of people, 5%, who are not behaving as well as we expect; the other 95% cause no problems. We deal with facts and not hearsay and we don't make sweeping statements to the press.

LCC: It is useful to get into schools where there are ethnic minorities, which we've done mainly in Lincoln and Grantham. For example, the Fire and Rescue Service help by giving talks – they have the respect of everyone and we ask them to spread messages encouraging community cohesion and it works very well.

WLDC: Yes, it works very well, especially with the Polish. And don't forget the churches as there is a community of Roman Catholics amongst migrants.

CoLC: We have a long-established neighbourhood working programme, with neighbourhood boards - involving local people and both city and county councillors - to tackle local issues and problems. We recently received £20,000 Government funding to put a neighbourhood plan together. Three existing boards will increase to five to cover all the city. We are working out now how it will be done and how it will be funded. There are opportunities for residents to come together and we recruit volunteers from migrant communities to work with us and quite successfully. If projects get rolling they become self financing. We also have a local translation service provided by volunteers. I want to see realistic, targeted projects that people can take on and run themselves to bring the community together.

*Are you reviewing any of your Designated Public Place Orders in your area? What are the outcomes?*

ELDC: There is no point if the police can't police it. The Police Community Support Officers and the police have the powers anyway; we don't think it would work any better.

SHDC: We've had a DPPO for a relatively short time. The police tried to push it back to us saying we could bring in a byelaw, but we pushed it back to the police. They take alcohol from people, send warning letters and if people are still in the area they get a fine. "Operation Trunk", aimed at reducing alcohol-related anti-social behaviour, recently ran for six weeks; it was very effective in terms of confiscating alcohol and removing people from an area. This is very reliant on police targeting; they put a lot of resources in for a short time. It has eased but it will increase again for the European Cup. We have to keep the pressure on. We work closely with the licensing and anti-social behaviour teams; we have the police in tomorrow to talk about it.

*What about off-licences?*

SHDC: That is an issue in Spalding. There are eastern European supermarkets and we are working with the licensing department to ensure that they are selling appropriate goods and have the appropriate licences.

LCC: We had an action group in the Witham area of Boston and wanted to extend the DPPO to the whole borough, but we had a problem engaging the police. I researched this amongst other local authorities; it is OK in certain areas, but it moves the problem on. I'm currently putting a report together. Since 2009 so many local authorities have borough wide DPPOs and are engaging the police; I'm sifting through the responses. Now spitting is being tackled and that issue has gone to Eric Pickles. Doncaster and Enfield are reporting on how they are doing with it. A byelaw is an option. Councillors Peter Bedford and Mike Gilbert are supporting us. A byelaw could be county-wide or a two-step approach could be used, with Boston as a beacon.

NKDC: The county community safety board will soon have one councillor from each district serving on it. With respect to licensing, we get weekly lists of who has applied for licences and we can get them taken to committee. We shut one down in Sleaford. The Police Inspector set up a procedure and if the pubs serve someone who is not fit it will be reported back to the licensing authority and this is paying dividends; it will stamp it out.

CoLC: We recently introduced a DPPO, but we're worried about displacing the problems, so we will review it in six months.

EMC: Twelve months ago, environmental health together with the Gangmasters' Licensing Authority, health & safety etc debated how to support each other in enforcement and use existing resources effectively.

BBC: The objections come from higher up in the police authority, because they are concerned about resources. But I believe it is not resource intensive – it can be done on a sliding scale, e.g. applying zero tolerance during the European Cup. The

issues relate to anti-social behaviour and they have the power to deal with that. PCSOs don't have the power to confiscate alcohol; the DPPO gives them that power.

ELDC: We do take this seriously, but we have a night-time economy and have seen a great improvement without using a DPPO.

*Can they confiscate alcohol as a matter of course? Because the police told us there had to be anti-social behaviour.*

SHDC: It is down to their discretion. A couple could just be drinking and if there are no problems they can let them carry on. Or it could be a group of people who are behaving well, but they can take the alcohol away if they think the situation may escalate.

LCC: The severity of street drinking has a knock-on effect. What impression does it give to visitors? There can be injuries and vandalism and public services work collectively to sort it out.

*[The Chairman thanked everyone for their contributions, saying the notes will be written up and the council would be in touch, that there are common themes that the authorities can work together on, involving the East Midlands Council in terms of a regional perspective. The representatives agreed to give the answers to the questions that remained unanswered and the Chairman said the information would be put in the public domain.]*

The dates of the next meetings were announced as 8<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> June 2012.

(The meeting ended at 9.00 pm)