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Chief Executive

Dealt with by: Mr. M. Bailey
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Our Ref: MB/LI/2
Your Ref:
Date: 30th June 2006

Lyons Inquiry into Local Government
Room 3/12
1 Horse Guards Road
London SW1A 2HQ

Dear Sir Michael,

Apologies for any delay, but I am writing to you to communicate the views of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council in terms of the Lyons Inquiry, following public engagement.

A working group of elected members was set up, following a meeting of our Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 16th February 2006. The working group examined options for public consultation. As a result of these discussions, a focus group of residents was set up and held in June 2006.

The comments made by the focus group are attached in full, but the following comments can be made, in our view: -

- There was no mention of Staffordshire County Council by the focus group, despite its prominent role in terms of service delivery in the Staffordshire Moorlands area. Instead, residents made comment on the role of Stoke on Trent as the neighbouring city, and contrasted the position in the Moorlands with that. No member of the group believed that the County Council should set priorities, preferring the District Council to perform this role.
- Equally, the view of the vast majority of residents was that central government should not make decisions over priorities or money – this should, again, be left to Staffordshire Moorlands District Council to decide.
- The residents contrasted the position of Stoke on Trent with that of the Staffordshire Moorlands. The feeling was that Stoke got more resources, due to its problems and issues, than this area did. There was a feeling that the Moorlands area should get more resources to deal with its problems as well.
- There was identification of the more ‘visible’ services offered by Staffordshire Moorlands DC, such as waste collection. There was also comment on policing levels, although this is



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obviously not a service directly provided by the District Council. Less visible services were not identified, but this seems to be an issue throughout the country, not just in this district.

- Most of the participants felt that the area was a good place to live, with nice countryside and towns with a variety of amenities. The feeling is, however, that more could be offered in terms of entertainment, and that more could be provided for younger people.
- There was not a great knowledge about which council provided what. There was also a feeling that there was not really a need for more than one council providing services. The view was taken that Staffordshire Moorlands DC should provide all services, as they are local and know what needs to be done for the area.

I hope that these points are taken on board as part of your deliberations, and please do not hesitate to contact me should you or your team require any further clarifications.

Thank you again for this opportunity to comment and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

MARK BAILEY
Policy Manager to the Council



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