

COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

GYPSY/TRAVELLER SUB-COMMITTEE

WOODHILL HOUSE, ABERDEEN, 19 JUNE, 2019

Present: Councillors A Stirling (Chair), A Allan, N Baillie, M Ewenson, M Ford (as substitute for Councillor A Wallace), G Owen (as substitute for Councillor H Smith) and I Taylor.

Apologies: Councillors D Robertson, H Smith and A Wallace.

Officers: Housing Manager (Strategy), Principal Solicitor (Democratic Services), Senior Committee Officer (Allan Bell), Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer, Gypsy/Traveller Teacher (Lyndsay Aspey) and Strategic Housing Officer (Liz Hamilton).

Also in attendance: Angie Wood (Partnership Manager, Aberdeenshire Housing and Social Care Partnership) and Inspector Sheila McDermott (Police Scotland).

1. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

The Chair asked members if they had any interests to declare in terms of the Councillors' Code of Conduct. No interests were declared.

2A. STATEMENT ON EQUALITIES

In taking decisions on the undernoted items of business, the Sub-Committee **agreed**, in terms of Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010:-

- (1) to have due regard to the need to:-
 - (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
 - (c) foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, and
- (2) to consider, where an equality impact assessment has been provided, its contents and to take those into consideration when reaching a decision.

2B. EXEMPT INFORMATION

The Sub-Committee **agreed**, in terms of Section 50A (4) and (5) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the items specified below so as to avoid disclosure of exempt information of the classes described in the undernoted paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

Item No	Paragraph No of Schedule 7A
7	2
8	8

3. MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE OF 13 FEBRUARY, 2019

On consideration of the circulated Minute of Meeting of the Sub-Committee of 13 February, 2019, members **approved** it as a correct record, after which the Minute was signed by the Chair.

4. ACTION PLAN FOR THE GYPSY/TRAVELLER SUB-COMMITTEE

With reference to the Minute of Meeting of the Sub-Committee of 6 September, 2017 (Item 4), there was circulated a report dated 6 June, 2019, by the Director of Infrastructure Services, which provided an update on each of the actions contained within the Sub-Committee's Gypsy/Traveller Action Plan.

Having **noted** members' comments in respect of the reduction in the number of unauthorised encampments, the length of occupation of allocated council houses by gypsy/travellers, privately-owned sites for travellers, health engagement and outreach, reporting hate crimes, and the provision of information on "negotiated stopping" in other local authority areas, the Sub-Committee **agreed** to continue to monitor the Action Plan.

5. MEASURING THE DELIVERY OF THE ACTION PLAN

With reference to the Minute of Meeting of the Sub-Committee of 5 September, 2018 (Item 4), when it had been agreed that a workshop should be held to review the Gypsy/Traveller Sub-Committee Action Plan, there was circulated a report dated 5 June, 2019, by the Director of Infrastructure Services, which advised that (1) the Action Plan had been updated to take account of members' feedback and (2) officers had developed a performance management framework to be incorporated into the Action Plan.

After consideration, the Sub-Committee:-

- (1) **agreed** the framework for measuring the delivery of the Gypsy/Traveller Sub-Committee Action Plan, and
- (2) **instructed** officers to report back to members, by exception, on any issues arising from the Action Plan.

6. MINISTERIAL ENQUIRY INTO GYPSY/TRAVELLERS

The Sub-Committee **noted** an oral update by the Housing Manager (Strategy) on the Scottish Government's ministerial inquiry into matters relating to gypsy/travellers and that a report would be published thereon in September, 2019.

7. DRAFT GYPSY/TRAVELLER SITE PROVISION STRATEGY

With reference to the Minute of Meeting of Aberdeenshire Council of 12 March, 2015 (Item 8) when it had been agreed to adopt the Aberdeenshire Gypsy/Traveller Site Provision Strategy, there was circulated a report dated 5 June, 2019, by the Director of Infrastructure Services (1) which explained that there had been an increase in site provision since 2015 and (2) to which was appended a copy of the updated Site Provision Strategy.

Having **noted** members' comments regarding sites identified under the current Local Development Plan, the need to identify sites across Aberdeenshire for smaller groups of travellers, the Council's Asset Management Plan, and potential options which had emerged since the development of the Aberdeenshire Western Peripheral Route, the Sub-Committee **agreed** the draft Site Provision Strategy for consultation with area committees.

8. AIKEY BRAE GYPSY/TRAVELLER SITE

With reference to the Minute of Meeting of the Sub-Committee of 13 February, 2019 (Item 7), when it had been agreed that a report should be submitted to the next meeting on the development of wireless internet facilities at Aikey Brae travellers' site, Old Deer, there was circulated a report dated 27 May, 2019, by the Director of Infrastructure Services, which (1) provided further information on proposals and costs for upgrading facilities at Aikey Brae, taking account of feedback from recent occupants and (2) gave an estimated cost breakdown for undertaking various works to improve the facilities onsite .

After detailed consideration, the Sub-Committee:-

- (1) **noted** the proposals contained within the report for upgrading the facilities at Aikey Brae travellers' site, and
- (2) **instructed** officers to submit a report, at the appropriate time, reviewing feedback and usage of the site, and evaluating the possibility of undertaking upgrade works at Aikey Brae, taking into account information on prospective new sites to be identified in the short-term.

