

REPORT TO GYPSY TRAVELLER SUB-COMMITTEE – 20 NOVEMBER 2019

ACTION PLAN FOR THE GYPSY/TRAVELLER SUB-COMMITTEE

1 Reason for Report / Summary

- 1.1 It has been agreed that the Gypsy/Traveller Sub Committee Action Plan will be monitored at every meeting of the sub-committee. It should also help to inform the agenda for future meetings.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 **The Committee is recommended to:**

Monitor the Action Plan.

3 Purpose and Decision Making Route

- 3.1 The Gypsy/Traveller Action Plan can be viewed at Appendix 1. The Action Plan has been informed by actions from previous meetings of the sub-committee including the wide-ranging session held on 21 June 2017, on meeting the needs of Gypsy/Travellers. In addition, it is based on the existing action plan of the Gypsy/Traveller Officer Group
- 3.2 Members of the Sub Committee are asked to consider the actions within the Action Plan and continue to monitor it at its regular meetings

4 Discussion

- 4.1 Aberdeenshire Local Housing Strategy 2018-2023, identifies minority ethnic communities as one of nine priorities. For each of the priorities in the local housing strategy, there is an action plan and performance management framework. Within the minority ethnic communities' priority, there is a Gypsy/Traveller Officer Group, which monitors and delivers an action plan across partner agencies. While much of this work is shared with the Gypsy/Traveller Sub-Committee, it was agreed at the meeting on the 6th September 2017, to formalise this approach, by creating an action plan for members to review at each meeting.
- 4.2 The Scottish Government and COSLA joint action plan 'Improving the Lives of Scotland's Gypsy/Travellers' has been recently published and is reported separately on this agenda. The national action plan has been cross-referenced with Aberdeenshire's action plan to demonstrate the strategic alignment between the two plans. Underneath each relevant action in appendix 1, the linked national action is set out in italics to provide reassurance to members of the alignment between local and national activity.

5 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

- 5.1 This report helps to deliver:
Council Priority 6 – Having the best mix of housing across all of Aberdeenshire.
Council Priority 7 – Supporting the delivery of the Health and Social Care Strategic Plan
Council Priority 8 – Working to reduce poverty and inequalities within our communities.
- 5.2 This report helps deliver against Aberdeenshire Children’s Services Plan Priority – Children and Young People’s Mental Health and Wellbeing

This report helps deliver on the LOIP Priority – Child Poverty

- 5.3 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed.

Subject	Yes	No	N/A
Financial			x
Staffing			x
Equalities	x		
Fairer Scotland Duty	x		
Town Centre First		x	
Sustainability			x
Children and Young People’s Rights and Wellbeing	x		

- 5.4 An equality impact assessment was carried out as part of the development of the Action Plan. This has been previously reported to the Sub-Committee and can be viewed at:
<http://committees.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/FunctionsPage.aspx?dsid=92469&action=GetFileFromDB>

It identified a positive impact as follows:

- The Action Plan includes increasing site provision for Gypsy/Travellers
- Gypsy/Travellers are to be able to access appropriate land, housing and support and encourage social integration.
- The provision of well-maintained permanent and stop over sites will contribute to meeting the needs of the Gypsy/Traveller Community.
- Gypsy/Travellers wishing to build private sites will be provided with assistance.

- 5.5 Any resource implications arising from these actions will be reported to the sub-committee accordingly. Any resource implications arising from these actions will be reported to the sub-committee accordingly.

6 Scheme of Governance

- 6.1 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and their comments are incorporated and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.
- 6.2 This committee is able to consider this item because it relates to a function of the committee to develop and approve Council policies and practices in respect of a) addressing the accommodation needs which meets the needs, culture and lifestyle of Gypsy/Travellers and unauthorised encampments.

Stephen Archer, Director of Infrastructure Services

Report by Ally Macleod, Housing Manager (Strategy)
6 November 2019

List of Appendices

Appendix 1. Gypsy/Traveller Sub Committee Action Plan.

GYPSY/TRAVELLER SUB COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN – 20 NOVEMBER 2019

Appendix 1

Outcome: The needs of Gypsy Travellers are met by more informed and joined-up planning of service delivery from Aberdeenshire Council and partner agencies					
No	Action	Lead	Deadline	Progress Update	Status
1	All services in Aberdeenshire Council take into account the needs of Gypsy/Travellers when developing policies and procedures.	All services	Ongoing	Policy Statement has been agreed by the Gypsy/Traveller Sub Committee. There has been some feedback on the Code of Conduct which is part of the Management of Unauthorised Encampments policy and procedures. It has been agreed that a standard Code of Conduct applicable to all authorities is not achievable, due to local considerations. However, Codes of Conduct reflect expectations of similar behaviour.	
2	Information sharing protocol is agreed between partners to enable joint working	Solicitor, Legal and Governance	December 2019	Final Information Sharing Protocol under review by partner agencies. The final draft is with the Police Scotland National Information Assurance Team.	
Outcome Gypsy/Travellers normally resident in Aberdeenshire and Gypsy/Travellers visiting the area have accommodation that meet their needs, culture and lifestyle					
3	Increase Gypsy/Traveller site provision in Aberdeenshire. The Local Development Plan should identify suitable sites for the Gypsy/Traveller community. It should also consider whether policies are required for	Affordable Housing Officer	Ongoing	Site Provision Strategy agreed by Aberdeenshire Council in 2015 has been reviewed, updated and was reported to the Gypsy/Traveller Sub-	

	<p>small privately-owned sites for Gypsy/Travellers</p> <p><i>Improving the lives of Scotland's Gypsy/Travellers: Action 1- Provide more and better accommodation</i></p>			<p>committee on 19th June 2019. To be taken round Area Committees.</p> <p>It was agreed at the Gypsy/Traveller Sub Committee on the 19th June 2019 to postpone further discussion on upgrading Aikey Brae, until the end of the year (December 2019). This will allow time to analyse use of the site, options and feedback from occupants, to provide a more informed overview.</p> <p>The Planning Applications for North Esk, reported to Full Council on the 27th June 2019 were approved. They have been referred to the Scottish Government, as per protocol and is awaiting allocation to the Reporter.</p> <p>Housing officers continue to work with the Local Development Plan Team, to identify potential new sites for inclusion in new LDP and increase the visibility of sites in the LDP. Working with the Affordable Housing Officer considering possible options from the Asset Register of Council owned land.</p>	
4	<p>Provide assistance to Gypsy/Travellers wishing to build private sites, giving consideration as to how Gypsy/Traveller communities can realise aspirations around</p>	<p>Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Support continues to be provided to Gypsy/Travellers wishing to build their own sites and investigation will be made into partnership working where</p>	<p></p>

	<p>private site development, including working in partnership with agencies such as Planning Aid Scotland</p> <p><i>Improving the lives of Scotland's Gypsy/Travellers: Action 1- Provide more and better accommodation</i></p>			<p>possible. The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer has shadowed a Planning Officer to get a better understanding of the planning process and how she can assist with planning applications. She also attended a meeting with Planning Aid Scotland (PAS). The service is free. The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer has a PAS leaflet to distribute to Travellers interested in setting up their own site. Planning requirements may initially deter Travellers.</p>	
5	<p>Monitor the numbers, size and location of unauthorised encampments</p>	<p>Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer continues to monitor encampments and provide regular updates to members. The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer will continue to circulate succinct weekly updates on encampments, although these can be reduced to monthly updates over the winter season. This season has seen a reduction in the number of encampments, thought to be related to the downturn in the local economy and employment opportunities.</p> <p>The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer will maintain cross checks of the occupants of the encampments, to ascertain if it is the same encampment</p>	

				moving to different locations in Aberdeenshire.	
6	<p>Working with Gypsy/Traveller communities to explore options for improving the management of encampments and the potential for developing more informal stopping places ('Negotiated Stopping')</p> <p><i>Improving the lives of Scotland's Gypsy/Travellers: Action 1- Provide more and better accommodation</i></p>	Gypsy/Traveller Liaison/Strategic Housing Officer	Ongoing	Engage with Gypsy/Travellers and discuss concepts for well managed encampments. Investigate 'Negotiated Stopping' and consider if it would be feasible to operate this in Aberdeenshire, working with the settled community. Await feedback on the Negotiated Stopping pilot in East Ayrshire. The Gypsy/Traveller Interagency group will consider feedback from the current pilots and discuss the way forward.	
7	<p>Assist Gypsy/Travellers with their housing needs</p> <p><i>Improving the lives of Scotland's Gypsy/Travellers: Action 1- Provide more and better accommodation</i></p>	Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer/Housing Options and Homelessness	Ongoing	The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer continues to provide support for Gypsy/Travellers wishing to access housing. This includes privately rented properties and assistance with Homeless applications.	
8	<p>Take into account new Scottish Government permanent site standards for future provision at Greenbanks, Banff.</p> <p><i>Improving the lives of Scotland's Gypsy/Travellers: Action 1- Provide more and better accommodation</i></p>	Housing Manager	Ongoing	The preferred option was agreed in consultation with Gypsy/Travellers, local members and sub-committee members. Consultation took place with residents on 19 th September 2018. The site opened 1 st April 2019. September 2019. Tenders have been returned and awarded. The contractor	

				is due to start on site on the 4 th November 2019. The Site Assistant was in post from 10 th June to 4 th October 2019. Feedback from residents regarding the Site Assistant has been positive.	
9	A review of the approach of including the provision of Gypsy/Traveller sites as part of wider housing/accommodation developments (e.g. within Local Development Plans). <i>Improving the lives of Scotland's Gypsy/Travellers: Action 1- Provide more and better accommodation</i>	Housing Manager		Please refer to Action 3.	
Outcome: Education needs of Gypsy/Travellers are met					
10	Further develop learning provision for children and young people from the Travelling Culture within Aberdeenshire based on a mixed model of delivery. <i>Improving the lives of Scotland's Gypsy/Travellers: Acton 2 - Improve access to public services</i>	Education Support Officer Lyndsay Aspey, (Teacher of ASL, Garioch and Formartine) is providing an update	Ongoing	Learning packs have been developed and are available for distribution. Guidance and advice to support school colleagues has been developed. An easy to read leaflet has been produced giving detail of support available to families. Support for families is provided by the Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer, Education Support Officer and Additional Support for Learning teachers.	

				<p>Improving education outcomes for children and young people from Travelling Cultures: Guidance is now on the Scottish Government Website.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning packs to be reviewed and updated as appropriate • Further resources have been acquired. Some resources are now at Midmill School for organising, further resources are at Gordon House. These will be catalogued and uploaded to website for borrowing. • Library service offering e-book borrowing • Learning boxes to be developed to support schools/Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer • e-learning being developed • Carole Tailford, Support for Learning (SFL) teacher is at North Esk one day a week, having taken up post prior to the summer break. 	
11	Further develop partnership working to support families, children and young people from the Travelling Culture within Aberdeenshire.	Education Support Officer Lyndsay Aspey, (Teacher of ASL,	Ongoing	Collaborative working and partnership working have been at the forefront of developing learning provision.	

	<p><i>Improving the lives of Scotland's Gypsy/Travellers: Acton 2 - Improve access to public services</i></p>	<p>Garioch and Formartine) is providing an update</p>	<p>Early Years, Education and Community Learning Development have worked together to deliver support.</p> <p>Lyndsay Aspey is working with Edinburgh University on a pilot, funded by STEP, to increase the uptake of Early Years provision for Gypsy/Traveller communities, through parental engagement.</p> <p>The Education Support Officer continues to attend appropriate national and local events e.g. Traveller Education Network which is held at the University of Edinburgh.</p> <p>Officers and teaching staff, working with children and young people from a Gypsy/Traveller background, provide support and advice to schools.</p> <p>Working collaboratively, Education continues to investigate ways to support families to engage in learning, which can include school attendance. This includes supporting families who may be;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Settled • Semi – sedentary • Highly mobile 	
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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out of school • Living within Aberdeenshire including on Aberdeenshire sites/private sites/unauthorised sites. <p>Sheila McDerment of Police Scotland wishes to engage with Education as part of the Diversity role of Police Scotland.</p> <p>The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer is working with Lyndsay Aspey, Teacher of ASL, to gather statistics on the number of Gypsy/Traveller children attending school. Stats have been circulated to members of the Sub Committee.</p>	
Outcome: Support, care and health needs of Gypsy/Travellers are better met					
12	<p>Use health engagement/outreach to ensure those temporarily resident in Aberdeenshire have access to preventative health information and services.</p> <p><i>Improving the lives of Scotland's Gypsy/Travellers: Acton 2 - Improve access to public services</i></p>	Health	Ongoing	<p>Since the report was considered at the Gypsy/Traveller Sub Committee of the 20th June 2018, it has been shared and discussed with the Health and Social Care Partnership Managers and the Partnerships Primary Care lead, HSCP colleagues in Aberdeen City and Moray and colleagues within the Scottish Public Health Network. Further improving access to and care received from Primary Care services</p>	

			<p>have been identified as a key area of focus.</p> <p>A meeting took place on Monday 21st October 2019, with, George Howie, Principal Health Improvement Officer Aberdeenshire Health & Social Care Partnership, Alison McFadden and Susan Boules, Dundee University, Kate Burton, Scottish Public Health Network (representing Scottish Government), the Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer and the Strategic Housing Officer, to discuss the implementation and evaluation of the Community Health Matters Gypsy/Traveller Community Health Project in Aberdeenshire (still to be confirmed but possibly also in Aberdeen City and Moray), one of the Scottish Government funded demonstration projects highlighted in the recently published Scottish Government/COSLA Gypsy/Traveller Action Plan, 'Improving the Lives of Scotland's Gypsy/Travellers (2019-2021)'. The project will involve the recruitment and training of a number of, primarily women, as Community Health Workers. They would be supported by a Project Coordinator to work as health advocates/champions</p>	
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			<p>within the Aberdeenshire Gypsy/Traveller community. While the project, which will run until August 2021, will be informed by the needs of the Gypsy/Traveller community discussions with as well as the wider research literature highlighted in the report considered at Gypsy/Traveller Sub Committee of the 20th June 2018, it's likely that there will be a focus on further improving access to health and social care services, further improving cultural awareness of Gypsy/Traveller culture and health and supporting Gypsy/Traveller communities to improve their own health. Dundee University have been commissioned by Scottish Government to evaluate this project. The meeting on 21st October included a site visit to Aikey Brae, to meet Travellers on site and discuss the project.</p> <p>The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer has been consulting with women in the Travelling community to gauge interest in the project.</p> <p>Scottish Government has recently produced and distributed guidance/new resource material on GP</p>	
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				<p>registration and the Gypsy/Traveller Community.</p> <p>Davie Donaldson is contacting RGU's School of Health Science to arrange Gypsy/Traveller Culture Awareness Raising sessions for Nursing and Midwifery students.</p>	
Outcome: Better and more constructive relationships are developed between Gypsy/Travellers and settled communities					
13	<p>Combat prejudice against the Gypsy/Traveller community, including, by providing information about culture, history and needs, whenever opportunity arises</p> <p><i>Improving the lives of Scotland's Gypsy/Travellers: Action 4 - Tackle racism and discrimination</i></p> <p><i>Improving the lives of Scotland's Gypsy/Travellers: Action 5 - Improve Gypsy/Traveller representation</i></p>	Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer	Ongoing	<p>Gypsy/Traveller Cultural Awareness training session for the Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer has taken place. Officers continue to explore ways to promote the good work being undertaken in this area, to promote a positive message and to continue to raise awareness. The Gypsy/Traveller Interagency Group provides a forum for discussion. There has been some positive press coverage. The target audience should be Councillors who would have the opportunity to raise awareness, particularly during elections. Schools should also be included, and this can be assisted through the Police Scotland Diversity Team. Explore the feasibility of recording Davie Donaldson's presentation and putting it on ALDO for information. June 2019 was Gypsy</p>	

				<p>Roma and Traveller Month. Events took place to raise awareness of the Gypsy/Traveller culture. There was an exhibition at Woodhill House the week of the 10th to the 14th June 2019. The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer has been attending Area Committees, Housing and other services team meetings, to raise awareness of the Gypsy/Traveller Culture and her role in Aberdeenshire.</p> <p>The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer attended an event at NESCOL – ‘Celebrate the Difference on Saturday 7th September 2019 in Fraserburgh.</p>	
14	<p>The Scottish Government’s Race Equality Action Plan (and associated Framework) should be used as a means to drive forward action at a local level, as well to continue and enhance joint working at a regional level</p> <p><i>Improving the lives of Scotland’s Gypsy/Travellers: Action 5 - Improve Gypsy/Traveller representation</i></p> <p><i>Improving the lives of Scotland’s Gypsy/Travellers: Action 4 - Tackle racism and discrimination</i></p>	Strategic Housing Officer/Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer	Ongoing	<p>Be aware of and take account of the information contained within the Scottish Government, A Fairer Scotland for All; Race Equality Action Plan 2017-2021. Further report on taking forward Race Equality Action Plan and associated framework was reported to Gypsy/Traveller Sub-Committee on 21st November 2018.</p>	

15	Work will take place with National Records of Scotland as they engage with Gypsy/Travellers and devise their plans for Scotland's Census 2021	Strategic Housing Officer/Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer	Ongoing to 2021	Officers will continue to work with National Records of Scotland and Scottish Government, as these plans emerge.	
16	There will be financial support for organisations working to improve outcomes in areas such as employment, health and education for the Gypsy/Traveller and Roma communities. <i>Improving the lives of Scotland's Gypsy/Travellers: Action 3 - Better incomes in and out of work</i>	Strategic Housing Officer/Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer	Ongoing	The Scottish Government has announced investment of up to £2m for existing sites to do work over and above statutory minimum standards. Officers will work closely with COSLA and the Scottish Government to identify any local opportunities to bid for funding.	
17	All Agencies should work together to counter prejudiced media coverage, provide joint responses to press inquiries about Gypsies/Travellers encampments and coordinate legal action where necessary. <i>Improving the lives of Scotland's Gypsy/Travellers: Action 4 - Tackle racism and discrimination</i>	Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer	Ongoing	Officers are working together, to monitor and respond where appropriate. Work closely with Corporate Communications, with representative from Corporate Communications sitting on the Gypsy/Traveller Officer Group. Cross agency media coverage and joint responses to press enquiries	
18	Raise awareness of the Aberdeenshire Council's Prejudice and Discrimination reporting process and encourage Gypsy/Travellers to report incidences of Hate Crime.	Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer	Ongoing	Training took place on Third Party Reporting for the Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer and Strategic Housing Officer. Updated <u>Prejudice Incident Reporting</u> information is on the Aberdeenshire Council website. Hate crime reports to the Police, in relation	

	<i>Improving the lives of Scotland's Gypsy/Travellers: Action 4 - Tackle racism and discrimination</i>			to Gypsy/Travellers is low. Police Scotland wishes to address this.	
19	Encourage Gypsy/Travellers to adhere to the Code of Conduct on Unauthorised Encampments	Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer	Ongoing	Adherence to the Code of Conduct is high and is continually monitored. Feedback suggests Gypsy/Travellers feel safe in Aberdeenshire.	
20	Support the Aberdeenshire Children & Young People's Charter for Gypsy/Traveller Communities	Strategic Housing Officer/Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer	Ongoing	The Charter was agreed at Aberdeenshire Council on the 27 th September 2018. The year of Young People has been supported by Officers. (Aberdeenshire Children & Young People's Charter)	

Completed Actions

Outcome: The needs of Gypsy Travellers are met by more informed and joined-up planning of service delivery from Aberdeenshire Council and partner agencies					
No	Action	Lead	Deadline	Progress Update	
1	Reflect the site and support needs of Gypsy/ Travellers in the Housing Need and Demand Assessment	Housing Manager	September 2017	Complete.	

2	Carry out research across the North East to identify the accommodation and support needs of Gypsy/Travellers	GREC	November 2017	Completed and actions included in the Gypsy/Traveller Action Plan.	
18	Support 'Year of Young People' 2018, with a particular interest in June 18 as this is Gypsy/Traveller History Month.	Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer	Ongoing	Support provided by CLD Officers for 'Year of Young People' in relation to young Gypsy/Travellers. Recent guidance issued to support young people from travelling communities and funding to be made available for projects to look at best practice. A report was presented to Education and Children's Services Committee and Communities Committee to raise awareness of work being undertaken with the Gypsy/Traveller community.	

