

## REPORT TO GYPSY TRAVELLER SUB-COMMITTEE – 30 JUNE 2021

### INTEGRATED APPROACH TO SERVICES

#### 1 Reason for Report/Summary

- 1.1 This Report is to update the Gypsy/Traveller Sub Committee on progress made covering the work of Tackling Poverty and Inequalities including the employability and financial support which has been developed for the Gypsy/Traveller Community to maximise income, increase training opportunities and address poverty.

#### 2 Recommendations

**The Committee is recommended to:**

- 2.1 **Acknowledge and support the progress made in integrated support and services which will increase engagement within this community.**

#### 3 Purpose and Decision-Making Route

- 3.1 The Tackling Poverty and Inequalities Group was set up by the Community Planning Partnership, to co-ordinate strategic development across Partners. This Partnership Group leads on the priority, to reduce poverty and inequalities across Aberdeenshire and is chaired by the Buchan Area Manager and reports through the Communities Committee.

#### 4 Discussion

- 4.1 The Gypsy/Traveller community who are settled or on sites across Aberdeenshire have been significantly impacted by the pandemic. The stigma this community feels has resulted in limited engagement with partners or council services, and they become hidden communities who will only be seen once a crisis has occurred.
- 4.2 The pandemic had a significant impact on their work as most of Gypsy/Traveller work is seasonal and the summer months which was affected by lockdown and the continued related restrictions resulted in a reduction in the amount of work available.
- 4.3 Most of the community are self-employed and this reduction in income has affected their ability to cover essential household costs such as fuel, food, digital access, phone and essential products.
- 4.4 The Tackling Poverty and Inequalities Strategic Partnership Group allocated funding for a short-term pilot project to set up a Wellbeing fund managed and developed by [Progress In Dialogue](#), an organisation which can directly support this community and takes a culturally inclusive approach. This organisation strives to improve the lives of all marginalized communities and to champion grassroots voices from across society. They value conversation and believe

that dialogue is key to social change and believe those with lived experience should always lead in discussions of their own needs and marginalisation. This organisation has developed a network of community champions who are trusted and engaged in the marginalized communities and therefore can support and inform those who require additional support on how and where to access it resulting in reducing their inequalities.

- 4.5 The fund was be used to support 213 people from marginalized communities who had been affected by the pandemic to purchase tools to support work/employment and cover fuel, digital inclusion, phone and food bills.
- 4.6 The final evaluation report will be available n the next few weeks however it has resulted in a Money Advice/ Welfare rights worker being hosted within Progress In Dialogue which will increase engagement and reduce the inequalities for the Gypsy/Traveller community.
- 4.7 Aberdeenshire Employability Partnership which is led by Aberdeenshire Council has secured a range of additional funding to support those effected by the pandemic and those who are seeking employment. The increased awareness of the employment challenges which faced this community as well as developing stronger links with the Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer has resulted in funding being allocated to this community to increase skills and ensure they have all the licenses in place to continue their way of life. This funding will continue to be available throughout 2021 to meet on going needs.
- 4.8 The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer has been investigating and progressing various training courses for members of the Travelling community by identifying employability barriers. Examples of the course which have been requested in consultation with Gypsy/Travellers are towing licenses, chainsaw competencies, driving theory tests. The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer works closely with the Senior Key Worker in Economic Development and Protective Services, Skills Development Scotland and (Scotland’s Rural College) SRUC.

## 5 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

- 5.1 This report contributes to all of the Council priorities and particularly resilient communities, health and wellbeing, education and infrastructure.
- 5.2 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
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**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 have made no comments.
- 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 needs, culture and lifestyle of Gypsy/Travellers.

**Alan Wood, Director of Infrastructure Services**

Report by Ally Macleod, Housing Strategy and Building Standards Manager  
14 June 2021