



**COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE**  
**GYPSY/TRAVELLER SUB-COMMITTEE**

**WEDNESDAY, 30 JUNE, 2021, at 10.15 A.M.**

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the GYPSY/TRAVELLER SUB-COMMITTEE, to be held by SKYPE, on WEDNESDAY, 30 JUNE, 2021 at 10.15 A.M.

This meeting will be live streamed and a recording of the public part of the meeting will be made publicly available at a later date.

22 June, 2021

Director of Business Services

To: Councillors A Stirling (Chair), A Allan, N Baillie, M Ewenson, G Owen, H Smith, I Taylor and S Wallace.

Also to: Councillor M Ford.

<b>Contact Person:-</b>	<b>Niall David</b> <b>Tel: 01467 538939</b> <b>Email: <a href="mailto:niall.david@aberdeenshire.gov.uk">niall.david@aberdeenshire.gov.uk</a></b>
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## B U S I N E S S

1. Sederunt and Declaration of Members' Interests.

2A. Statement on Equalities:

Consider, and if so decided, adopt:- "In line with the Council's legal duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 the Committee, in making decisions on the attached reports, shall have due regard to the need to":-

- (i) eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- (ii) advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- (iii) foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

2B. Resolution:

Consider, and if so decided, adopt the following resolution: - That under Section 50A (4) and (5) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, the public and media representatives be excluded from the Meeting for Items 9 and 10 of the business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information of the classes described in the relevant Paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

- 3. Minute of Meeting of the Sub-Committee of 1 October, 2020. **(Pages 4-6)**
- 4. Support to Gypsy/Traveller Communities During Covir-19 Pandemic. **(Pages 7-8)**
- 5. Integrated Approach Across Services. **(Pages 9-11)**
- 6. Draft Equality Outcomes 2021-2025. **(Pages 12-17)**
- 7. Gypsy/Traveller Sub Committee Action Plan. **(Pages 18-25)**
- 8. Draft Gypsy/Traveller Site Provision Strategy 2021-2026. **(Pages 26-50)**

### ITEM FOR CONSIDERATION WITH THE PRESS AND PUBLIC EXCLUDED

- 9. Additional Scottish Government Funding. **(EXEMPT under paragraph 8)**  
**(Pages 51-57)**
- 10. Gypsy/Traveller Site Demonstration Fund. **(EXEMPT under paragraph 8)**  
**(Pages 58-63)**

### DESCRIPTION OF EXEMPT INFORMATION

**Paragraph 8 - Estimated Expenditure on Contracts** - Expenditure to be incurred by the Council under a contract for acquisition of property or supply of goods or services.

## **PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY – GUIDANCE FOR MEMBERS**

### **What is the duty?**

In making decisions on the attached reports, Members are reminded of their legal duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to the need to:-

- (i) eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- (ii) advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- (iii) foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The “protected characteristics” under the legislation are: age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation; and (in relation to point (i) above only) marriage and civil partnership.

### **How can Members discharge the duty?**

To ‘have due regard’ means that in making decisions, Members must consciously consider the need to do the three things set out above. This requires a conscious approach and state of mind. The duty must influence the final decision.

However, it is not a duty to achieve a particular result (e.g. to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination or to promote good relations between persons of different racial groups). It is a duty to have due regard to the need to achieve these goals.

How much regard is ‘due’ will depend upon the circumstances and in particular on the relevance of the needs to the decision in question. The greater the relevance and potential impact that a decision may have on people with protected characteristics, the higher the regard required by the duty.

### **What does this mean for Committee/Full Council decisions?**

Members are directed to the section in reports headed ‘Equalities, Staffing and Financial Implications’. This will indicate whether or not an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been carried out as part of the development of the proposals and, if so, what the outcome of that assessment is.

An EIA will be appended to a report where it is likely that the action recommended in the report could have a differential impact (either positive or negative) upon people from different protected groups. The report author will have assessed whether or not an EIA is required. If one is not required, the report author will explain why that is.

Where an EIA is provided, Members should consider its contents and take those into account when reaching their decision. Members should also be satisfied that the assessment is sufficiently robust and that they have enough of an understanding of the issues to be able to discharge their legal duty satisfactorily.

For more detailed guidance please refer to the following link:-  
[http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded\\_files/EqualityAct/pseud\\_technical\\_guidance\\_scotland.doc](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/EqualityAct/pseud_technical_guidance_scotland.doc)

## COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

### GYPSY/TRAVELLER SUB-COMMITTEE

#### SKYPE MEETING, 1 OCTOBER, 2020

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

**Apologies:** Councillors D Robertson, and I Taylor.

**Officers:** Housing Manager (Strategy), Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer, Strategic Housing Officer (Liz Hamilton), Sergeant Kim Wood, Police Scotland, Senior Solicitor (Jill Joss), and Senior Committee Officer (Niall David)

#### 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.

#### 2. RESOLUTIONS

##### A. PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

In taking decisions on the undernoted items of business, the 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 and 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.

##### B. EXEMPT INFORMATION

The 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.

### 3. MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE OF 20 NOVEMBER, 2019

On consideration of the circulated Minute of Meeting of the Sub-Committee of 20 November, 2019, members **approved** it as a correct record, to be signed by the Chair at a later date.

### 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), when it had been agreed to create an action plan for members of the Sub-Committee to review at each meeting, there was circulated a report dated 18 September, 2020, by the Director of Infrastructure Services (1) which explained that the Gypsy/Traveller Action Plan had been informed by actions addressed at previous meetings of the Sub-Committee, and (2) requested comments on the refresh of the draft Gypsy/Traveller Site Provision Strategy, which was appended to the report.

After discussion, the Sub-Committee **agreed** to:-

- (1) acknowledge the Action Plan;
- (2) instruct officers to report back to the Sub-Committee with a refreshed Action Plan, setting out renewed priorities; and
- (3) instruct officers to refresh the draft Gypsy/Traveller Site Provision Strategy, with specific reference to be made to issues concerning employability, health and wellbeing, and education.

### 5. GREENBANKS SITE

Consideration was given to a circulated report dated 17 September, 2020, by the Director of Infrastructure Services, which updated the Sub-Committee on the upgrade of the Gypsy/Traveller site at Greenbanks and requested consideration of the potential to extend the season at Greenbanks beyond its current April to September opening period.

The report explained that the Sub Committee were being asked to consider the progress of the upgrade and opening period review. Comments from the meeting of the Banff and Buchan Area Committee on 29 September, 2020 were reported verbally.

In terms of the upgrade to facilities, the report highlighted that, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the contractor had not completed work and handed it back to the Council until 31 July, 2020. The site had reopened to residents on 7 August, 2020 and feedback on the upgraded facilities had been widely positive.

Following discussion, the Sub-Committee **agreed**:-

- (1) to acknowledge progress with the upgrade to the Greenbanks site;
- (2) that the Greenbanks site remain open for an extended period as a pilot exercise until 30 November, 2020; and

- (3) that officers monitor interest and levels of movement amongst the wider Gypsy/Traveller community on an ongoing basis with a view to reporting back to the Sub-Committee should there be an increase in demand.

## **6. ADDITIONAL SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT CAPITAL FUNDING FOR GYPSY/TRAVELLER SITES**

Consideration was given to a circulated report dated 17 September, 2020, by the Director of Infrastructure Services, which provided an update on the funding allocated to local authorities to improve Gypsy/Traveller sites and the plans to utilise this in Aberdeenshire.

The report explained that on 14 September, 2020, the Scottish Government had advised local authorities of the arrangements for applying for this funding. The Scottish Government and COSLA would then assess plans to spend the funding on three principles, namely: Community Engagement; Improvement; and Transparency and Accountability.

The report highlighted that the Covid-19 pandemic had placed significant constraints on the ability to engage with Gypsy/Travellers and had delayed the Scottish Government and COSLA action plan. However, previous engagement had taken place with Gypsy/Travellers at both sites in Aberdeenshire. Officers had drawn up initial proposals for further discussion with potential site residents, elected members and Scottish Government and COSLA. These were detailed in an appendix to the report.

Following discussion, the Sub-Committee **agreed** to support the proposals to use Aberdeenshire's allocation of the Scottish Government's capital funding for improving Gypsy/Traveller sites, as set out in the appendix to the report.



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

### SUPPORT TO THE GYPSY/TRAVELLER COMMUNITY DURING THE PANDEMIC

#### 1 Reason for Report / Summary

- 1.1 The report provides an update on the support provided by the Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer to the Gypsy/Traveller Community during the pandemic

#### 2 Recommendation

**The Committee is recommended to:**

- 2.1 **Note and acknowledge the support provided by the Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer to the Gypsy/Traveller Community during the pandemic.**

#### 2 Purpose and Decision-Making Route

- 3.1 Due to the pandemic the Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer understood that the services delivered by Aberdeenshire Council would have to change.

#### 4 Discussion

- 4.1 The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer was proactive in identifying the priorities which were:

- continuity of targeted support to those who need support financially and practically
- helping to ensure that those who were priority were not further disadvantaged during the lockdown period by loss of income
- mental health was not negatively impacted by the loss of the personal support from the Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer by contacting everyone on a basis weekly to check if there were any issues or concerns

- 4.2 In terms of support, specific to Covid -19, The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer:

- contacted every family of which she was aware on a weekly basis in the settled community and on private sites throughout Aberdeenshire as per [COVID-19 Response Planning Supporting Gypsy/Traveller Communities](#)
- arranged deliveries from Food Banks in Ellon and Peterhead for families as and when required, mainly on a weekly basis.
- ensured Gypsy/Travellers had contact details for local community resilience groups in Ellon, Peterhead, Mintlaw and New Pitsligo, and also how to contact Grampian Assistance Hub
- contacted other agencies for assistance, e.g. AberNecessities for two families in Ellon
- continued to assist families with benefit information and help with Universal Credit, Best Start Food grants and passing on information on

funds for self-employed, the majority of Gypsy/Travellers being self-employed

- contacted families with regard to accessing learning packs,
- made everyone aware so that they could get in contact should they wish to talk about anything to try and alleviate any possible mental health issues

4.3 Support, advice and assistance was provided to occupants on unauthorised encampments in line with Scottish Government's [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Framework to support Gypsy/Traveller communities](#)

## 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.

5.3 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		

5.5 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 no comments have been made.

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 addressing the needs, culture and lifestyle of Gypsy/Travellers.

**Alan Wood, Director of Infrastructure Services**

Report by Ally Macleod, Housing Manager (Strategy)  
14 June 2021



## **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

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

### DRAFT EQUALITY OUTCOMES 2021-2025

#### 1 Reason for Report

- 1.1 Committee is recommended to consider the progress made in developing draft equality outcomes for 2021-2025.

#### 2 Recommendations

**The Committee is recommended to:**

- 2.1 Consider and comment on the draft Equality Outcomes for the next four years.**

#### 3 Purpose and Decision-Making Route

- 3.1 The Equality Act 2010 sets out the public sector general equality duty that requires public authorities to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations. These requirements apply across the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, sexual orientation, and (to a limited extent) marriage and civil partnership. Definitions of each of the protected characteristics can be found on the Equality and Human Rights website.
- 3.2 The Scottish Government introduced specific duties for Scottish public authorities, to enable better performance of the public sector equality duty. One of these specific duties requires the Council to publish a set of Equality Outcomes by 30 April every four years and publish progress towards the outcomes every two years.
- 3.3 This report presents the Council's third set of Equality Outcomes, which build on the existing set and establish some new priorities. These outcomes are not meant to encompass all the work the Council does to reduce social inequality in Aberdeenshire. Instead, they reflect what are considered to be the priorities.

#### 4 Discussion

##### 4.1 Impact of Covid-19 on Equality

- 4.1.1 It is widely acknowledged that the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic are significant and unequal. This is both from the effects of contracting COVID-19 and the restrictions and lockdown measures required to control the spread of the virus. The impacts of COVID-19 have compounded existing inequalities with many protected groups experiencing increased risk from health impacts, mental health and economic disadvantage. Some examples from the Scottish Governments research into COVID-19 impact on equalities has identified that

‘disabled people were significantly more likely to experience loneliness and social isolation before the pandemic, and many disabled people have been worried about becoming acutely isolated at this time’ and ‘there have been reports of an increase in hate crime in the UK against people perceived to be of Chinese, South Asian or East Asian ethnicities since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic’. Each of these factors can be further heightened by intersectionality of protected characteristics or socio-economic disadvantage. Further information on the impacts that have been identified, so far, of COVID-19 on equality can be found on the Scottish Government website.

4.1.2 Tackling these issues will be challenging but there is an opportunity as part of recovery and renewal to tackle many inequalities and by including them in our Equality Outcomes it will ensure that equalities are at the forefront of any goals. Equality and poverty will be considered as part of Aberdeenshire’s recovery plan and specific actions identified to measure the new equality outcomes for 2021 to 2025.

## 4.2 Draft Equality Outcome Development Process

4.2.1 Outcomes are the changes or effects that result from an action the Council has taken. Specifically, an Equality Outcome should achieve one or more of the following: eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, or foster good relations. Equality Outcomes must be evidence-based and authorities should take reasonable steps to involve people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who represent the interests of those people.

## 4.3 Developing Draft Outcomes

The following stages outline the approach taken to develop the draft Equality Outcomes:

Evidence Review	Collecting research and data to form a database of evidence to establish our baseline of facts, figures and key issues.
Equality Community Survey	An <a href="#">online survey</a> was published in February 2021.
Equalities Citizen’s Panel Survey	A series of questions was published in the March 2021 Citizen’s Panel which was distributed to 1,100 panel members. The panel is broadly representative of Aberdeenshire population. Around 300 responses were received.
Community Conversations	Fifteen community conversations have been hosted through existing networks or online through Microsoft Teams during March and April. These conversations have involved people representing the majority of the nine protected characteristics and aimed to understand individuals’ lived experience.
Consultation with British Sign Language users	A small number of conversations took place with BSL users within Aberdeenshire. These were facilitated locally by a colleague who uses BSL.

<a href="#">Aberdeenshire Voices on the Pandemic</a>	A report from CLD which captures feedback from less heard voices outlining their experiences of Covid.
EHRC Event	Participation in the Equality and Human Rights event for Local Authorities. This event focused on aiding Local Authorities to identify and tackle the most significant and persistent inequalities.
<b>Education</b>	
<b>During the pandemic ECS are prioritising frontline support for schools which has had an impact on consultation activities</b>	
Pupils	Local Voices groups, Pupil Participation Forum, Youth Forums (x2)
Parents	Local Voices groups, Lived Experience Forum (Tackling Poverty & Inequalities)

4.3.1 There were consistent themes that emerged through the research and consultation. These were:

- in general, the themes of the existing outcomes continue to be a priority but some adjustments are required to make them more specific to particular groups and to incorporate recommended targeted actions to improve the effectiveness of our work
- improve the measurement of outcomes so that we are more able to demonstrate the impact of the work instead of volume
- involvement of groups in service design from the earliest stage
- commit to the principles of [Inclusive Communication](#)
- improved communication both internally and with partners about the work being done, sharing best practice and learning
- partnership working and utilising specialist knowledge of equality organisations

4.3.2 The above presents only a brief summary of the feedback generated through the outcome development process. The Council's Engagement and Equalities team is able to provide more detailed feedback from the various stages of engagement activity.

#### 4.4 Draft Equality Outcomes

4.4.1 The proposed outcomes are a mixture of a revised outcomes from [the set for 2017 to 2021](#) and a number of new actions that have been identified through research and stakeholder engagement.

4.4.2 Based on the feedback we received from stakeholders, we have also made some more general changes to the set of outcomes including:

- We have separated the outcomes for the Council as an Employer and for the Education Authority, although there is crossover and areas of joint working between the outcomes this ensured clarity over the key target audience

- The previous outcome on training will not be carried forward in the same way. Although, based on the engagement and research, staff training and awareness continues to be a priority, the feedback also suggested tailored training may have more impact, therefore training and awareness actions and measures will be incorporated into each of the new outcomes in order to aid in the facilitation of change

4.4.3 Each proposed outcome is aligned to the relevant element of the Equality Act 2010 General Duty and to the Council Priorities. The proposed outcomes are shared and adopted by the Education Authority (Aberdeenshire Council’s Education Services) and the Aberdeenshire Licensing Board, as well as applying to all Council services.

4.4.4 Although not required by the legislation, but in line with the approach enshrined in Directorate and Area Plans, it is proposed that actions and measures to achieve them are developed to sit behind the proposed outcomes. In recognition of the fact that the Council is already beyond the statutory deadline for publication of our outcomes, this work will be carried out simultaneously with consultation on the proposed outcomes. This will also allow the opportunity to align any actions and measures to Directorate and Area Plans.

4.4.5 The following six outcomes are the Council’s Proposed Equality Outcomes for 2021 to 2025. They form a structure for equality-related work by the Council, but do not encompass everything we do to address and reduce the inequality experienced by our communities and citizens.

4.4.6 Further information for each of the outcomes is being developed. Depending on what stage of development the associated action plans are at, there will be a slight variation in presentation across Service Delivery, Aberdeenshire Council as an employer and Education Authority. This will include evidence to support why each outcome is a priority, linked strategies and some of the areas for potential action that will be considered as part of the next steps.

<b>Aberdeenshire Council Proposed Equality Outcomes 2021-25</b>	
1	Disabled people have an improved experience in accessing services that meet their needs through more regular and systematic involvement in design of service delivery across the Council.
2	Service users are provided with information accessible to them on services provided by the Council particularly, those who face barriers through disability, language and digital exclusion
3	Aberdeenshire Council (Education & Children’s Services) continue to improve outcomes in relation to attainment and achievement for children and young people including those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, those for whom English is not their first language, Gypsy/Traveller children and young people, those who identify as black and minority ethnic and disabled children and young people.
4	Aberdeenshire Council as an employer create a fair and inclusive place to work where differences between people are celebrated and barriers are reduced for women, disabled people, minority ethnic people and young people

### Aberdeenshire Council Proposed Equality Outcomes 2021-25

5	An increased proportion of women, black and minority ethnic people, younger people, disabled people and LGBTI+ are supported to enter employment or training.
6	LGBTI+, disabled, religious, faith and black and minority ethnic people have increased confidence to report hate crime through our work with partners to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• prevent hate crime before it happens</li> <li>• encourage people to report hate crime when it happens</li> <li>• improve service responses to victims</li> </ul>

4.6 [Formal consultation](#) with stakeholders has commenced and will be ongoing until July and the outcomes of the consultation with the draft outcomes will be considered by Education & Children’s Services (the Education Authority) and the Aberdeenshire Licensing Board in August 2021 before being considered by Full Council on 23 September 2021.

## 5 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

5.1 This report helps deliver the Strategic Priorities “Education & Health & Wellbeing” within the Pillar “Our People” and “Resilient Communities” within the Pillar “Our Environment”. The review of progress the Council has made towards mainstreaming the Public Sector Equality Duty and in working towards the Equality Outcomes for 2017 – 2021 helps the council to meet it’s requirements under the Equality Act 2010. The development of Equality Outcomes for 2021 – 2025 also ensure the Council meets the duties within the The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012.

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

5.3 An integrated impact assessment (IIA) has not been carried out as the Gypsy/Traveller Sub Committee are being asked their views as a consultee. An Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) is in development to support the development of the Equality Outcomes and the feedback from the Sub Committee will be incorporated into the IIA.



5.4 Staff within Aberdeenshire Council are committed to furthering activity in support of equalities and this is considered as part of the wider staff implications and embedded in day-to-day activity. There are no financial implications

5.5 The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level:

ACORP002 – Changes in government policy, legislation and regulation  
ACORP006 – Reputation management (including social media)

5.6 The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Strategic level

BSSR002 - Communities are confident, resilient and inclusive. Individuals feel secure and in control of their circumstances.

## **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 had no comments to make.

6.2 This committee is able to consider this item because it relates to a function of the committee to consider and comment on Council policies and practices that relate to outcomes for Gypsy/Travellers.

## **RITCHIE JOHNSON, DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS SERVICES**

Report prepared by Lynne Gravener (Strategic Policy Lead)  
Date: 14 June 2021

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

### **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**

**The Committee is recommended to:**

- 2.1 **Comment on the new action plan to meet the needs of Gypsy/Traveller communities in Aberdeenshire.**

#### **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 engagement with Gypsy/Travellers, community representatives and discussion with 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.
- 4.2 The action plan has been reviewed in light of the Covid-19 pandemic to ensure it reflects the needs of Gypsy/Traveller communities in the years ahead.
- 4.3 Members are asked to consider the proposed actions in the plan.

#### **5 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk**

- 5.1 This action plan contributes to all of the Council priorities and particularly resilient communities, health and wellbeing, education and infrastructure.
- 5.2 The Aberdeenshire action plan is aligned with the Scottish Government and COSLA joint action plan 'Improving the Lives of Scotland's Gypsy/Travellers' national action plan that was published in late 2019. This report helps deliver against Aberdeenshire Children's Services Plan and the priority of Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing. This report helps deliver on the Local Outcome Improvement Plan Priority of 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:

[Aberdeenshire Council - Committees and Meetings](#)

It identified a positive impact as follows:

- The Action Plan includes increasing site provision for Gypsy/Travellers
- Gypsy/Travellers will have better incomes in and out of work
- 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.

## 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 had no comments to make.

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.





### Alan Wood, Director of Infrastructure Services



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



**List of Appendices** Appendix 1. Gypsy/Traveller Sub Committee Action Plan.


**GYPSY/TRAVELLER SUB COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN – 30 JUNE 2021**




**Appendix 1**

	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Update</b>	<b>Status</b>
	Better incomes in and out of work	Help Gypsy/Travellers maximise their incomes and increase uptake of financial support they are eligible for	Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer	The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer is part of the Financial Inclusion Partnership and has been progressing benefits claims on behalf of the Travelling community, establishing any other entitlements to maximise incomes.	
		Support parents to overcome barriers to work, and in-work poverty	Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer	The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer has been progressing the provision of iPad, laptops and chrome books for adults as well as children to facilitate digital inclusion, to assist with benefit claims and other online activities. She is also arranging training courses in, for example, chainsaw competency and towing licences. She also provides practical assistance with job applications and CVs.	
		Improve standard of living by reducing daily living costs for Gypsy/Travellers	Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer	The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer assists with additional payments for utilities, replacement white goods, foodbank deliveries and provisions for children from Abernecessities.	
	Provide more and better accommodation	Develop and agree a new Gypsy/Traveller Site Provision Strategy 2021-2026	Housing Manager	Area Committees have commented on the strategy and it is to be considered by the Gypsy/Traveller Sub Committee on 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2021.  It has been agreed that identifying land for a site in central Aberdeenshire is a priority. Officers monitor the asset disposal register for possible new sites in addition to those identified in the LDP	

	Outcome	Action	Lead	Update	Status
				<p>There is a lack of suitable permanent site provision in Aberdeenshire where Gypsy/Travellers can live in a culturally appropriate manner and there is a need for at least one such site.</p> <p>Consultation to be carried out with Gypsy/Travellers on the type of provision they would like to see in Aberdeenshire.</p> <p>The Strategy should reflect a mixture of provision.</p> <p>Support continues to be provided to Gypsy/Travellers wishing to build their own sites.</p>	
		Consider upgrades for Aikey Brae as part of new national fund.		To be discussed and suggested improvements to the site drawn up previously to be reviewed in the light of the funding.	
		Carry out site improvements at Aikey Brae and Greenbanks.		<p>Improvements to Aikey Brae and Greenbanks sites are ongoing.</p> <p>Works starting on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2021 at Aikey Brae and include the provision of a height restricted, security barrier additional safety lighting, water stance, storage facilities, educational playground markings, play equipment, planters, outdoor seating, picnic benches, rotary driers and Wi-Fi.</p> <p>Wi-Fi is now in place at Greenbanks facilitating digital inclusion for the residents. Seating, picnic benches and planters are also on the site.</p>	

	Outcome	Action	Lead	Update	Status
	Improve access to public services	Raise awareness	Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer	<p>The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer provides advice, support and signposting for occupants on unauthorised encampments.</p> <p>The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer continues to monitor unauthorised encampments and provide regular updates to members.</p> <p>Engagement continues to take place with Gypsy/Travellers and concepts for well managed encampments forms part of the discussion.</p> <p>Aberdeenshire is a member of COSLA's 'Negotiated Stopping as an approach' group, considering best practice and listening to feedback.</p> <p>The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer continues to provide support for Gypsy/Travellers wishing to access housing and Officer supports families with homeless applications and housing issues.</p>	
		Health		<p>During the pandemic and lockdown the Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer contacted every family of which she was aware on a weekly basis, in the settled community and on private sites throughout Aberdeenshire as per COVID-19 Response Planning Supporting Gypsy/Traveller Communities, to ascertain if any assistance was required and assuring them of her support and concern. This was invaluable for their wellbeing and mental health.</p> <p>The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer also contacted members of the Travelling community to inform them of the opportunity for vaccination.</p>	

	Outcome	Action	Lead	Update	Status
				<p>The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer raises awareness of services available and will assist Travellers to access them as required. Child Smile visited Aikey Brae pre pandemic as did Health Visitors.</p> <p>The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer has assisted with PIP claims and blue badge applications.</p>	
		Education		<p>The pandemic has had a significant effect on education provision. Throughout, support for families was provided by the Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer, Additional Support for Learning teacher and the Quality Improvement Officer.</p> <p>The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer and Lyndsay Aspey, Teacher of ASL ensured learning packs were delivered to families. Learning boxes have been developed by Lyndsay Aspey for distribution by the Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer.</p> <p>Through the Connecting Scotland initiative, families and young people were provided with Chromebooks, laptops, iPads and Mi-Fis to support learning, through digital connectivity to improve education outcomes and avoid digital isolation. Lyndsay Aspey and QIO, Paul Cruickshank have identified families who have not yet received devices and collated applications.</p> <p>Three families are being supported through the digital families' pilot project, through STEP. Online resources have been developed for National 2 and 3 literacy and numeracy.</p>	

	Outcome	Action	Lead	Update	Status
				<p>Collaborative and partnership working continue to be at the forefront of developing learning provision with the Additional Support for Learning teacher attending appropriate national and local events and continuing to investigate ways to support families to engage in learning.</p> <p><a href="#">Improving education outcomes for children and young people from Travelling Cultures: Guidance</a> is now on the Scottish Government Website.</p>	
	Tackle racism and discrimination	Combat prejudice against the Gypsy/Traveller community, including, by providing information about culture, history and needs, whenever opportunity arises		<p>Gypsy/Traveller Cultural Awareness raising sessions have been rolled out in-house, with partners and the third sector, to promote a positive message.</p> <p>Awareness raised on North East activities run by Article 12 for Gypsy Roma and Traveller history month.</p> <p>Officers work together, to monitor and respond where appropriate to counter prejudiced media coverage and continue to work closely with Corporate Communications.</p>	
	Improve Gypsy/Traveller Representation	Consult regularly with Gypsy/Traveller communities on accommodation and services to ensure these are fit for purpose	Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer	<p>Annual surveys take place at Greenbanks Travellers Site as per Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) requirements. The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer carries out ad hoc surveys with the occupants of Aikey Brae Travellers Site.</p> <p>Additional targeted surveys are carried out as required.</p>	
		Involve Gypsy/Travellers in the design and delivery of any new accommodation proposals	Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer	<p>Residents on Greenbanks were consulted on the upgrade of the facilities to achieve Scottish Government minimum standards. The upgrade was completed in 2020 and feedback has been positive.</p> <p>Residents on Aikey Brae Greenbanks have been consulted on improvements from the Scottish</p>	



	Outcome	Action	Lead	Update	Status
				Government '£2m additional funding for public sector Gypsy/Traveller sites over and above the Minimum Standards.'	
		Ensure regular input from Gypsy/Traveller communities into decision-making groups	Strategic Housing Officer	<p>The Strategic Housing Officer and the Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer attend the Gypsy/Traveller Sub Committee meetings, are members of the Gypsy/Traveller Interagency Group and COSLA's Negotiated Stopping as an approach 'group.</p> <p>The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison has a list of details of Gypsy/Travellers who she can contact for input to decision making.</p> <p>Introduce a Scrutiny Panel</p>	

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

### **DRAFT GYPSY/TRAVELLER SITE PROVISION STRATEGY 2021-2026**

#### **1 Reason for Report / Summary**

- 1.1 Members to consider and approve the draft Gypsy/Traveller Site Provision Strategy 2021-2026.

#### **2 Recommendations**

**The Committee is recommended to:**

- 2.1 Consider the comment on the draft Gypsy/Traveller Site Provision Strategy 2021-2026 from area committees.**  
**2.2 Agree the Gypsy/Traveller Site Provision Strategy.**

#### **3 Purpose and Decision Making Route**

- 3.1 The report has been considered by the six area committees.

#### **4 Discussion**

- 4.1 The Aberdeenshire Local Housing Strategy 2018-2023 commits to ensuring minority ethnic communities have access to appropriate accommodation.
- 4.2 On 12 March 2015 Aberdeenshire Council agreed the Gypsy/Traveller Site Provision Strategy. This proposed new site provision in each of north, central and south Aberdeenshire to meet the accommodation needs of Gypsy/Traveller communities.
- 4.3 Since 2015 there has been an increase in Gypsy/Traveller site provision with the development of Aikey Brae and the approval of private sites which are detailed in appendix 1.
- 4.4 The draft Site Provision Strategy reviews the levels and locations of unauthorised encampments since 2015 and considers feedback from Gypsy/Travellers expressed both informally and through formal research reports.
- 4.5 Area committees have provided comments on the strategy. These are set out in appendix 3. Officer responses and any proposed changes to the strategy have been included.

#### **5 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk**

- 5.1 This report supports the delivery of the Council priorities of Infrastructure, Resilient Communities, Health and Wellbeing under the pillars of Our People and Our Environment. To deliver these strategic priorities this report contributes to

the Council priority of ‘everyone having access to appropriate accommodation and housing support where required’.

5.2 This report relates to the Aberdeenshire Local Housing Strategy 2018-2023 and helps to deliver actions to improve accommodation for Gypsy/Travellers.

5.3 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation is 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 in appendix 2 has been carried out as part of the development of the proposals above and identifies the following positive impacts:

- Identifying a mix of provision will help to address the accommodation needs of the Gypsy/Traveller community.
- The provision of a mix of sites will assist in addressing the health, education needs and well-being of the Gypsy/Traveller community.
- Improving the provision of a mix of sites and facilities may attract more occupants to sites and reduce the number of unauthorised encampments.

It also identified the following potentially negative impact:

- It may not be possible to provide the preferred type of site in a preferred location.

5.5 The following risks apply:

- ECSSR004 – Support Inclusive, Vibrant and Healthy Communities. The Gypsy/Traveller Officer Group meets regularly to receive feedback from Gypsy/Travellers and to ensure access to services. Regular monitoring of the action plan will mitigate risk.

## **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 have been 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 monitor and approve Council practices in respect of housing needs.

### **Alan Wood, Director of Infrastructure Services**

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

List of Appendices:

- Appendix 1 – Aberdeenshire Gypsy/Traveller Site Provision Strategy 2021-2026 - draft
- Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment.
- Appendix 3 – Area Committee Comments and Officer Responses

# **Aberdeenshire Gypsy/Traveller Site Provision Strategy 2021-2026 - draft**

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## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Legal Background

- 1.1.1 Gypsy/Travellers have been in Scotland for many centuries and still retain their own cultures and customs. The term 'Gypsy/Traveller' refers to distinct groups - such as Romany Gypsies, Scottish and Irish Travellers - who regard the travelling lifestyle as being part of their ethnic identity. There are also other types of Traveller, such as Occupational Travellers, Show-people and New Age Travellers: distinct groups who do not regard themselves as Gypsy/Travellers and do not receive protection under equalities legislation.
- 1.1.2 Under the Equality Act 2010 it is unlawful to discriminate against people because of protected characteristics such as age, race, religion or belief, disability, sex, marriage, civil partnership, gender reassignment, or sexual orientation. The Act also imposes a duty on listed public authorities, including local authorities, to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. Gypsy/Travellers are recognised as an ethnic group under the definition of 'race' in the Act.
- 1.1.3 Under the Homelessness (Scotland) Act 2003, a person is homeless if he/ she has accommodation but it consists of a moveable structure, vehicle or vessel designed or adapted for human habitation and there is no place where he/she is entitled or permitted both to place it and to reside in it. Although some Gypsy/Travellers live in houses outwith the travelling season, for many their only accommodation all year round is a caravan and are therefore deemed homeless if they have nowhere official to place and reside in their caravan.

### 1.2 Strategic Context

- 1.2.1 The Aberdeenshire Council Plan 2020-2022 prioritises:
- Everyone having access to appropriate accommodation and housing support where required
  - work to reduce poverty and inequalities in our communities.
- 1.2.2 The Aberdeenshire Local Housing Strategy 2018-2023 commits that:
- Minority ethnic communities will have access to appropriate land, housing and support, encouraging social integration.
  - Gypsy/Travellers normally resident in Aberdeenshire and Gypsies/Travellers visiting the area have accommodation that meets their needs, culture and lifestyle.
-

- 1.2.3 The Scottish Government's Housing to 2040 vision commits to improve and widen access to Gypsy/Traveller accommodation.
- 1.2.4 Providing more and better accommodation forms part of the joint Scottish Government and COSLA action plan 'Improving the Lives of Gypsy/Travellers' 2019-2021 which commits to:
- Ensure the needs of Gypsy/Travellers are appropriately and collectively resourced
  - Understand the accommodation needs and preferences of Gypsy/Travellers to inform future provision
  - Make sure the planning system works better for Gypsy/Traveller communities
- 1.2.5 Partnership working is a key aspect of progressing these outcomes and delivering on the Gypsy/Traveller Site Provision Strategy. The Council's Gypsy/Traveller Officer Group meets on a quarterly basis and has representation from all services within the council, as well as members from Police Scotland, NHS Grampian and representation from the Gypsy/Traveller Community and Grampian Regional Equality Council. This group takes forward actions from Aberdeenshire Council's overarching Gypsy/Traveller Action Plan.
- 1.2.6 The Gypsy/Traveller Sub Committee, consisting of eight Councillors, meets on a quarterly basis and takes forward actions in the Gypsy/Traveller Sub Committee Action Plan. Representatives from Health, Education and the Police Scotland, attend the meetings and other services on request.
- 1.2.7 The Gypsy/Traveller Interagency Group includes members from the three local authorities in the Grampian area – Aberdeenshire, Aberdeen City and the Moray Councils, Police Scotland, NHS Grampian and Grampian Regional Equality Council (GREC).
- 1.2.8 Aberdeenshire Council officers and the Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer engage with the members of the Travelling community on a regular basis. This involves consultation exercises as well as more in-depth meetings regarding specific issues.
-



## 2 The Need for Gypsy/Traveller Sites

### 2.1 Unauthorised Encampments

2.1.1 Aberdeenshire Council strives to provide a balance between the needs of members of the settled community and those of Gypsy/Travellers who want to stay on a temporary encampment when in Aberdeenshire but are restricted in where they can legally encamp. Aberdeenshire Council recognises Gypsy/Travellers right to a nomadic life and respects the fact that Gypsy/Travellers may wish to maintain a travelling way of life. Camping is seen as an expression of the Gypsy/Travellers' cultural identity. Public agencies acknowledge that there should be no discrimination against Gypsy/Travellers because of their way of life and culture. However, the Council acknowledges the concerns and anxieties of the settled community in relation to some unauthorised encampments. The same standards of behaviour should be expected from all members of the community. Aberdeenshire Council has a [Code of Conduct](#) for unauthorised encampments, providing guidelines on dealing with unauthorised encampments.

2.1.2 The volume of unauthorised encampments over the last decade is shown below by year and by area.

**Table 1: Unauthorised encampments in Aberdeenshire 2010-2019**

Year	Number
2010	30
2011	23
2012	53
2013	45
2014	28
2015	37
2016	61
2017	65
2018	22
2019	21

**Table 2: Unauthorised encampments by area**

Area	Proportion
------	------------

Banff and Buchan	17%
Buchan	22%
Formartine	19%
Garioch	13%
Kincardine and Mearns	24%
Marr	4%

- 2.1.3 While there is a spread of encampment locations across five of the six administrative areas within Aberdeenshire. The proportion of unauthorised encampments by area reflects the movement patterns of Gypsy/Traveller communities along the A90, A93, A96 and A947 corridors and in to traditional stop-off locations.
- 2.1.4 This demonstrates that there is unmet need inbetween the current local authority and private sites.
- 2.1.5 The majority of encampments take place between January and October.

## 2.2 What Gypsy/Travellers Say

- 2.2.1 A wide range of research and feedback has been gathered from Gypsy/Travellers and other communities over the years to inform the development of this strategy. This includes:
  - 2.2.2 In July 2015, 24 Gypsy/ Travellers in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire, from 12 different groups of Gypsy/ Travellers took part in a consultation exercise to assess the accommodation needs of the Travelling community. Results showed that 100% of all participants thought there should be an increase in site provision in both Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. There was no clear preference on whether they should be developed and managed privately or by the local authorities. A further survey has been carried out with Gypsy/Travellers during summer 2017. This found that as a whole the most desirable type of site for participants was a local authority provided permanent site, but when taken alongside data on the number of encampments over recent years, and feedback to the 2015 consultation, there is a demand for a range of provision. Given the number and size of encampments at present, it seems likely that there will continue to be a shortfall of provision.
  - 2.2.3 This reinforces earlier research carried out in 2009 that recommended providing a mix of small, family orientated sites as well as larger sites to accommodate Gypsy/Travellers who travel in varying sizes of groups. This should include a mix of fully serviced and stopover sites.
  - 2.2.4 Aberdeenshire's Citizens' Panel's 38th edition of 'Viewpoint' included a section on Gypsy/ Traveller site provision. The questions posed sought the opinion of residents in Aberdeenshire on current provision provided to Gypsy/ Travellers along with feedback on future provision. Results showed that residents of Aberdeenshire believe that there should be more Gypsy/Traveller site provision in Aberdeenshire.

## 3 Current Site Provision

### 3.1 Local Authority Provision

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- 3.1.1 Aberdeenshire Council currently provides two sites at Greenbanks, Banff (20 pitches) and at Aikey Brae (10 pitches). The Greenbanks site opens April to September, is managed by a Site Assistant, and was upgraded to fully comply with the Scottish Government minimum site standards in 2019/20. Aikey Brae is a stopover site that was established in 2018. Each pitch has a chemical toilet, an electric point and access to water. The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer manages the site and is available to provide support, advice and signposting to occupants.
- 3.1.2 In Scotland a total of 20 local authorities and registered social landlords provide one or more Gypsy/Traveller sites, while the remaining 12 local authority areas do not have any public site provision. Fife, Highland and Aberdeenshire have the greatest provision, accounting for nearly a third of all public site pitches in Scotland. The Council will continue to work with other local authorities to ensure that need is met on a regional and national basis.

### 3.2 Private Provision

- 3.2.1 There is a range of private provision across Aberdeenshire. This includes sites at Boyndie (14 pitches), New Pitsligo (2 pitches), Peterhead (2 pitches), Boddam, Peterhead (4 pitches), Kemnay (7 pitches) and North Esk, St Cyrus (20 permanent and 9 stopover).

## 4 Future Site Provision

### 4.1 Impact of Increased Provision on Unauthorised Encampments

- 4.1.1 Management and control of any site provision has been proven to improve standards and conditions for all stakeholders. Well managed, authorised Gypsy/Traveller sites will not only help meet the accommodation needs of the Travelling community but will help reduce tensions between settled and Travelling communities.
- 4.1.2 The opportunities being presented by the provision of authorised stopover sites include the ability to create very positive links with education, primary health and social work services. The opportunity will also be given to create positive links with settled communities, to share cultures and to acknowledge diversity.

### 4.2 Local Development Plan Sites

- 4.2.1 Four sites have been identified under the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2017. They are:

Location	LDP reference
Inverurie	OP4 at Crichie, Inverurie, A halting site for gypsy/travellers is required within the Thainstone/Crichie employment area, which is made up of sites OP12, OP13 and BUS6-10, or the area of unallocated land between sites BUS5 and BUS6.

Blackdog	OP1 land at Blackdog Land for a Gypsy/Traveller transit site will be required to be made available on part of the site, prior to the development of the fourth phase, as outlined in the agreed masterplan.
Ellon	Provision of a Gypsy/Traveller site at Balmacassie (site OP4) is pending considering as part of the Proposed Local Development Plan 2020 examination.
Chapleton	OP 1 Chapleton. There is also a requirement for a halting site for Gypsy/Travellers to be provided within the employment land.

- 4.2.2 Although these will contribute to meeting long-term need, particularly in the central Aberdeenshire area, they are unlikely to meet need in the short to medium term. There remains a need for more immediate provision. The Grampian Gypsy/Traveller Accommodation Needs Study (2017) commended this approach to meeting need but recommended that this approach should be strengthened.
- 4.2.3 Research from Planning Aid Scotland shows that there is a general preference among Gypsy/Travellers for private sites, with the desire for self-sufficiency and independence often cited as reasons for this. Furthermore, private sites are seen as giving a level of security to their residents, allowing them to avoid potential conflict with other Gypsy/Traveller families, which can occur on public sites, and to ensure that future generations will have accommodation when they form their own families.
- 4.2.4 This strategy will continue to support Gypsy/Travellers who wish to build private sites, giving consideration as to how Gypsy/Traveller communities can realise aspirations around private site development, including working in partnership with agencies such as Planning Aid Scotland.
-

## 5 Proposed Site Locations

### 5.1 North Aberdeenshire

- 5.1.1 In light of the high level of local authority and private provision in the north of Aberdeenshire, further sites run by the local authority are not considered to be a focus of this strategy.
- 5.1.2 It is accepted that there remains need across Aberdeenshire and any private provision proposed through the planning system would be supported by this strategy on this basis.

### 5.2 Central Aberdeenshire

- 5.2.1 Given the absence of local authority provision and limited private provision in central Aberdeenshire, this strategy will continue to focus on additional provision in this area. It is acknowledged that some of the long-term need is likely to be met through the Local Development Plan process, but there remains a short and medium term need that is unlikely to be met.

### 5.3 South Aberdeenshire

- 5.3.1 It is acknowledged that the North Esk site at St Cyrus helps to meet the needs of Gypsy/Travellers in the south of Aberdeenshire.
- 5.3.2 It is accepted that there remains need across Aberdeenshire and any private provision proposed through the planning system would be supported by this strategy on this basis.

### 5.4 Other

- 5.4.1 The strategy will support the joint Scottish Government and COSLA efforts in its action plan to map and, where possible, reopen traditional stopping sites. It will also continue to monitor the pilots on negotiated stopping to understand its potential in Aberdeenshire.
-

## 6 Guidance on Site Development, Consultation and Approval

### 6.1 Site Development Guidance

- 6.1.1 Scottish Government produced guidance on minimum standards on Improving Gypsy/Traveller Sites, in 2015. The level of provision and amenities on Gypsy/Traveller sites will vary. However, until such times as up-to-date Scottish Government guidance on site provision is published, minimum site provision will meet that detailed within Aberdeenshire Council's Stopover Site Development Guidance.
- 6.1.2 There are three main types of Gypsy/Traveller site provision. Each of the three types of site would be managed effectively based on the level of amenities provided and the size of site. Three options for developing a Gypsy/Traveller site are:
- Permanent sites provide residents with permanent accommodation. These can be run by Local Authorities or registered social landlords, or privately owned by their residents. Gypsy/Travellers typically stay on-site for the majority of the year, only travelling for a few weeks.
  - Transit sites are permanent developments which are only used temporarily by their residents, usually when they are en route between more long-term locations. They provide more basic amenities than permanent sites.
  - Stopping places are pieces of land where Gypsy/Travellers have traditionally stayed for short periods of time. A Stopover site would have basic amenities. This includes pitches that would have access to a water stand-pipe, refuse facilities and portable toilets. People typically stay on site for shorter periods.
- 6.1.3 To bring Council owned areas up to an acceptable standard of provision any planning application would be required to be submitted with evidence to support the 'test' in the Local Development Plan that it should "allow reasonable access to employment, education, community facilities and the main road network". At its meeting on 21 February 2019, the Gypsy/Traveller Sub-Committee was consulted on the proposed wording for this policy in the Local Development Plan 2021.
- 6.1.4 The Gypsy/Traveller Accommodation Study (2009) and Grampian Gypsy/Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (2017) recommended sites accommodate 7-15 pitches. Feedback suggests a range of sizes and types of provision is preferable in meeting need.

### 6.2 Site Consultation and Approval

- 6.2.1 Officers on the Council's Asset Disposal Group will assess the suitability of Council assets for disposal for use as Gypsy/Traveller Sites that fit the objectives in the strategy. The suitability of areas of land as potential sites are discussed initially by the Council's Gypsy/Traveller Officer Group including input from Gypsy/Traveller community representatives. The formal reporting of proposed sites is through the Council's Gypsy/Traveller Sub-Committee.
-

6.2.2 Gypsy/Traveller site provision is of regional significance. If planning applications are submitted, Aberdeenshire Council will make a decision on the planning applications. The relevant Area Committee comments would be sought.





## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Stage 1: Title and aims of the activity (“activity” is an umbrella term covering policies, procedures, guidance and decisions).	
Service	Infrastructure Services (Housing)
Section	Housing Strategy
Title of the activity etc.	Aberdeenshire Gypsy/Traveller Site Provision Strategy 2021-2026
Aims of the activity	To ensure Gypsy/Travellers normally resident in Aberdeenshire and Gypsies/Travellers visiting the area, have accommodation that meets their needs, culture and lifestyle and have access to appropriate land, housing and support, encouraging social integration.
Author(s) & Title(s)	Alexander Macleod, Housing Manager (Strategy), Di Faithfull, Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer and Liz Hamilton, Strategic Housing Officer.
Stage 2: List the evidence that has been used in this assessment.	
Internal data (customer satisfaction surveys; equality monitoring data; customer complaints).	Housing Needs and Demand Assessment (2017) Local Housing Strategy 2018-2023  Grampian Gypsy/Traveller Accommodation Needs Research 2017
Internal consultation with staff and other services affected.	Planning Legal Services Finance
External consultation (partner organisations, community groups, and councils).	Gypsy/Travelling Community Gypsy/Traveller Sub Committee Gypsy Traveller Officer Group Gypsy/Traveller Interagency Group
External data (census, available statistics).	Grampian Gypsy/Traveller Accommodation Needs Research 2017

Other (general information as appropriate).	The Site Provision Strategy had not been reviewed since 2015?
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Stage 3: Evidence Gaps.	
Are there any gaps in the information you currently hold?	No

Stage 4: Measures to fill the evidence gaps.		
What measures will be taken to fill the information gaps before the activity is implemented? These should be included in the action plan at the back of this form.	Measures:	Timescale:

Stage 5: Are there potential impacts on protected groups? Please complete for each protected group by inserting "yes" in the applicable box/boxes below.				
	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unknown
Age – Younger	Yes	Yes		
Age – Older	Yes	Yes		
Disability	Yes	Yes		
Race – (includes Gypsy/Travellers)	Yes	Yes		
Religion or Belief			Yes	
Gender – male/female			Yes	
Pregnancy and maternity			Yes	

Sexual orientation – (includes Lesbian/ Gay/Bisexual)			Yes	
Gender reassignment – (includes Transgender)			Yes	
Marriage and Civil Partnership			Yes	

Stage 6: What are the positive and negative impacts?		
Impacts.	Positive (describe the impact for each of the protected characteristics affected)	Negative (describe the impact for each of the protected characteristics affected)
Please detail the potential positive and/or negative impacts on those with protected characteristics you have highlighted above. Detail the impacts and describe those affected.	Identifying a mix of provision will help to address the accommodation needs of the Gypsy/Traveller community.	It may not be possible to provide the preferred type of site in a preferred location.
	The provision of a mix of sites will assist in addressing the health, education needs and well-being of the Gypsy/Traveller community	
	Improving the provision of a mix of sites and facilities may attract more occupants to sites and reduce the number of unauthorised encampments	

Stage 7: Have any of the affected groups been consulted?	
If yes, please give details of how this was done and what the results were. If no, how have you ensured that you can make an informed decision about mitigating steps?	Representatives from the Gypsy/Traveller Community had an input into the Site Provision Strategy as well as being consulted for the outcomes in the Grampian Gypsy/Traveller Accommodation Needs Research 2017.

Stage 8: What mitigating steps will be taken to remove or reduce negative impacts?
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	Mitigating Steps	Timescale
These should be included in any action plan at the back of this form.	The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer will continue to engage and consult with the Gypsy/Traveller Community, on unauthorised encampments to get their feedback on accommodation needs.	Ongoing process
	The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer will continue to engage and consult with the occupants of Aikey Brae and Greenbanks Travellers sites to get their feedback on the sites, taking account of their needs and their feedback on future accommodation needs.	Ongoing process
	Gypsy/Traveller Officer groups will continue to discuss accommodation needs and share examples of good practice.	Ongoing process

Stage 9: What steps can be taken to promote good relations between various groups?	
These should be included in the action plan.	Continued engagement, dialogue and consultation with the Gypsy/Traveller community and occupants of Aikey Brae and Greenbanks Traveller site to assess any future needs and requirements.

Stage 10: How does the policy/activity create opportunities for advancing equality of opportunity?
Considering the accommodation needs of the Travelling Community and consulting with them to agree a way forward, helps to promote good relations and encourage integration, creating mixed and sustainable communities.

Stage 11: What equality monitoring arrangements will be put in place?	
These should be included in any action plan (for example customer satisfaction questionnaires).	The group is already recognised as a minority ethnic group.

Stage 12: What is the outcome of the Assessment?

Please complete the appropriate box/boxes	1	No negative impacts have been identified –please explain.
	2	Negative Impacts have been identified, these can be mitigated - please explain. * Please fill in Stage 13 if this option is chosen.
	The Housing Service will continue working with the Gypsy/Traveller Community to identify other suitable sites in Aberdeenshire. The GTLO will continue to engage and consult with the Travelling Community to establish their accommodation needs, as well as providing support to them.	
	3	The activity will have negative impacts which cannot be mitigated fully – please explain. * Please fill in Stage 13 if this option is chosen

\* Stage 13: Set out the justification that the activity can and should go ahead despite the negative impact.

There is an identified need for the provision of a mix of sites throughout Aberdeenshire.

Stage 14: Sign off and authorisation.

Sign off and authorisation.	1) Service and Team	Housing Strategy	
	2) Title of Policy/Activity	Aberdeenshire Gypsy/Traveller Site Provision Strategy 2019-2014	
	3) <b>Authors:</b> I/We have completed the equality impact assessment	Name: Liz Hamilton Position: Strategic Housing Officer Date: Signature:	Name: Di Faithfull Position: Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer Date: Signature:

for this policy/ activity.	Name: Position: Date: Signature:	Name: Position: Date: Signature:
4) Consultation with Service Manager	Name: Ally Macleod, Housing Manager Date:  Signature:	
5) Authorisation by Director or Head of Service	Name: Rob Simpson Position: Head of Housing Date: Signature	Name: Position: Date:
6) If the EIA relates to a matter that has to go before a Committee, Committee report author sends the Committee Report and this form, and any supporting assessment documents, to the Officers responsible for monitoring and the Committee Officer of the relevant Committee. e.g. Communities Committee.		Date:
7) EIA author sends a copy of the finalised form to: eia@abdnshire		Date:
(Equalities team to complete) Has the completed form been published on the website? YES/NO		Date:

Action Plan					
Action	Start	Complete	Lead Officer	Expected Outcome	Resource Implications
Consultation with Gypsy/Travellers on sites	2019	2024	Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer	Feedback to inform the future Site Provision Strategy	Within existing resources
Consultation with Gypsy/Travellers on unauthorised encampments	2019	2024	Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer	Feedback to inform the future Site Provision Strategy	Within existing resources
Discussion in Gypsy/Traveller Officer Groups (internal and external) on site provision	2019	2024	Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer/Strategic Housing Officer	Feedback to inform the future Site Provision Strategy	Within existing resources

**APPENDIX 3 – AREA COMMITTEE COMMENTS**

<b>Area Committee</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Officer Response</b>
Banff and Buchan	Item noted – no comments	N/A
Buchan	(1) to welcome the proposal to upgrade the Aikey Brae stopover site, as this will have a positive effect on unauthorised encampments in the local area, and to request that the proposed plans for the site be made available to the BAC Members for their information, and	Plans for the upgrades at Aikey Brae have been shared with the Buchan Area Committee and are detailed as part of item x on this agenda.
	(2) that Officers clarify, within the Strategy, the number of private provision sites available, and provide this detail to the BAC Members for information also	Numbers have been cross-checked with the information available from the Scottish Government Planning and Environmental Appeals Division. Information has been made available to the Buchan Area Committee.
Formartine	Note joint working with Scottish Government to develop draft design for new sites – may provide a set of criteria for sites to ease local consideration of requirements and aid private developers of sites	Noted.
	Officers to consider existing sites in terms of which, if appropriate, might allow dual provision of halting/permanent sites and year-round accessibility options	Further enhancement of existing provision to be considered once details of national fund become available.
	Note pressure on central Aberdeenshire reflecting travel corridors and Gypsy Traveller preferred routes	Noted.
	Note development updates on Blackdog and Ellon	Noted.
	Commend ongoing work of Team in supporting the Gypsy Traveller Community, especially during the last year of Covid related issues	Noted and passed on comments to team.



Garioch	The Committee welcomed the availability of funding and that it brings the opportunity to strengthen and firm up the commitment of the Council to the provision of gypsy traveller sites and would suggest that the strategy needs to incorporate a timetable with clear deadlines for milestones to be achieved for the Garioch area, and in other areas of Aberdeenshire.	Noted. Further details on the process through which sites will be identified, considered and delivered has been incorporated in the strategy.
	P192 - consideration of the proposed site in the Inverurie Area should depend on its relation to the new A96 route	Noted for future planning.
	The provision of any site needs to be demand-led and provided specifically where the gypsy travellers require it.	Noted. Any new provision should be focused on areas where there have been high numbers of unauthorised encampments and where Gypsy/Travellers want to be located.
Kincardine and Mearns	The Committee commended the engagement work of the Gypsy Traveller Liaison Officer with the Gypsy Traveller Community and sought more local engagement.	Noted. Gypsy/Travellers will be engaged in the design and delivery of any sites that come forward or improvements that are made to existing sites. A Gypsy/Traveller Officer group with services, partners and representatives of the Gypsy/Traveller communities meets regularly.
	2.2.1 suggested different language with regards to “does not cause any disturbances”	This has been changed to more accurately reflect Aberdeenshire’s approach to managing unauthorised encampments and to align with Scottish Government guidance.
	The Committee would welcome the provision of a mixture of sites private and local authority owned to address the needs of the Gypsy Traveller Community.	Noted. The research informing the strategy indicates that Gypsy/Traveller communities prefer a mixture of types of provision and, as such, the strategy seeks to support both public and private accommodation.
	The Committee suggested with regard to the housing strategies look to address issues such as health, education etc.	Noted. The Gypsy/Traveller Sub-Committee action plan focuses on each of these areas and is monitored regularly.

Marr	Noted that the volume of unauthorised encampments within Marr over the last decade was extremely small	Noted.
	noted that provision being considered for developed would be in Central and North Aberdeenshire, where there was more need for encampments	Noted.
	Noted that Scottish Government guidance had been published in relation to travelling, in light of Covid-19 and local authorities and Police Scotland were supporting those who were affected	Noted.