

## REPORT TO GYPSY TRAVELLER SUB-COMMITTEE – 21 NOVEMBER 2018

### ACTION PLAN FOR THE GYPSY/TRAVELLER SUB-COMMITTEE

#### 1 Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

##### 1.1 Monitor the Action Plan.

#### 2 Background

- 2.1 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 6<sup>th</sup> September 2017, to formalise this approach, by creating an action plan for members to review at each meeting.
- 2.2 The Gypsy/Traveller Sub-Committee action plan can be viewed in **Appendix 1**. It 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.
- 2.3 The Action Plan will be monitored at every meeting of the sub-committee. Furthermore, it should help to inform the agenda for future meetings.
- 2.4 The Action Plan has been updated to take account of the recommendations from the Gypsy/Traveller Needs Assessment 2017.
- 2.5 Following the meeting of the committee on 5 September 2018, a workshop was held to review the action plan in relation to performance measures and outcomes. The action plan has been updated to take account of feedback from this session. In addition, officers are responding to the feedback on performance indicators and are developing a performance management framework to be incorporated into the action plan. This will be reported to the next meeting of the committee.
- 2.6 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 and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.

### **3. Scheme of Governance**

- 3.1 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.

### **4. Implications and Risk**

- 4.1 An equality impact assessment has been carried out as part of the development of the Action Plan.

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

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

- 4.3 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.

- 4.4 A Town Centre Impact Assessment is not required as this does not have a differential impact on the Town Centre First Principle.

**Stephen Archer, Director of Infrastructure Services**

Report by Ally Macleod, Housing Manager (Strategy)  
23 October 2018

**GYPSY/TRAVELLER SUB GROUP ACTION PLAN – 21<sup>ST</sup> NOVEMBER 2018**

<b>Outcome: The needs of Gypsy Travellers are met by more informed and joined-up planning of service delivery from Aberdeenshire Council and partner agencies</b>					
<b>No</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Deadline</b>	<b>Progress Update</b>	<b>Status</b>
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. This will be reviewed by Officers in conjunction with Gypsy/Travellers.	✔
2	Information sharing protocol is agreed between partners to enable joint working	Solicitor, Legal and Governance	December 2018	Updated template received. To be forwarded to Police Scotland by the end of September 2018. Deadline for finalising the protocol is December 2018. To be reported to the Communities Committee on 20 <sup>th</sup> December 2018.	✔
<b>Outcome Gypsy/Travellers normally resident in Aberdeenshire and Gypsy/Travellers visiting the area have accommodation that meet their needs, culture and lifestyle</b>					
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 small privately-owned sites for Gypsy/Travellers	Affordable Housing Officer	Ongoing	Site Provision Strategy agreed by Aberdeenshire Council in 2015 is under review. Aikie Brae site completed and opened in May 2018. At an extraordinary meeting of the sub-committee convened on the 12 <sup>th</sup> October 2018 it was agreed in	✔

				<p>principle, to extend the opening period of the Aikey Brae site to 31 March, 2019, in order to continue to accommodate travellers who may otherwise present as homeless should the site close and that a report be presented to the next Gypsy/Traveller Sub-Committee on 21<sup>st</sup> November, 2018, to review the provision onsite, further requirements and to explore options for extending the opening periods for Aikey Brae and Greenbanks in the future and the Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer should seek the views of the Gypsy/Traveller community with regard to giving consideration to designing the opening periods for gypsy/traveller sites around the school year periods.</p> <p>Aberdeenshire Council, at its meeting on 28 June 2018, approved an additional six months of engagement and dialogue, with the residents of North Esk Park, in the pursuit of an acceptable solution with a further update report to the meeting of Aberdeenshire Council on 17 January 2019.</p> <p>Housing officers to work with the Local Development Plan Team to identify</p>
--	--	--	--	--

				potential new sites for inclusion in new LDP and increase the visibility of sites in the LDP. Suggested that officers from LDP team be invited to a future meeting of Sub-Committee.	
4	Provide assistance to Gypsy/Travellers wishing 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	Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer	Ongoing	Support continues to be provided to Gypsy/Travellers wishing to build their own sites and investigation will be made into partnership working where possible. There is positive partnership working with Education and support can and is put in place as need is identified.	✔
5	Monitor the numbers, size and location of unauthorised encampments	Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer	Ongoing	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.	✔
6	Working with Gypsy/Traveller communities to explore options for improving the management of encampments and the	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	✔

	potential for developing more informal stopping places ('Negotiated Stopping')			feasible to operate this in Aberdeenshire, working with the settled community. COSLA and the Site Managers Network are hosting events in mid-November on Negotiated Stopping. Report to future Sub-Committee.	
7	Assist Gypsy/Travellers with their housing needs	Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer/Housing Options and Homelessness	Ongoing	Officers continue to provide support for Gypsy/Travellers wishing to access housing. Two families have been receiving assistance with applications for permanent housing.	✔
8	Take into account new Scottish Government permanent site standards for future provision at Greenbanks, Banff.	Housing Manager	Ongoing	Options under consideration. Consultation has taken place with Gypsy/Travellers, local and sub-committee members. Consultation was carried out with residents on 19 <sup>th</sup> September 2018. Banff and Buchan Area Committee agreed to add project on to housing workplan on 6 November 2018. Further report to follow to Aberdeenshire Council on 22 November 2018.	✔
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).	Housing Manager		Please refer to Action 3.	✔

<b>Outcome: Education needs of Gypsy/Travellers are met</b>			
10	Further develop learning provision for children and young people from the Travelling Culture within Aberdeenshire based on a mixed model of delivery.	Education Support Officer	<p>June 2018</p> <p>Learning packs have been developed and are being printed. Examples were available for Sub-Group members Guidance and advice Guidance 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> 
11	Further develop partnership working to support families, children and young people from the Travelling Culture within Aberdeenshire.	Education Support Officer	<p>June 2018</p> <p>Collaborative working and partnership working has been at the forefront of developing learning provision. Early Years, Education and Community Learning Development have worked together to deliver support. 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. Working collaboratively we will continue to investigate ways to support families engage in learning, which can include school attendance. This includes supporting families who may be</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Settled</li> <li>• Semi – sedentary</li> <li>• Highly mobile</li> <li>• Out of school</li> <li>• Living within Aberdeenshire including on Aberdeenshire sites/"private sites"/ unauthorised sites.</li> </ul>	
12	<p><b>Outcome: Support, care and health needs of Gypsy/Travellers are better met</b></p> <p>Use health engagement/outreach to ensure those temporarily resident in Aberdeenshire have access to preventative health information and services.</p>	Health	Ongoing	<p>Further to the report to the Gypsy/Traveller Sub Committee of 20 June 2018, providing an update on Gypsy/Traveller health and wellbeing, including the use of health services and outlining action to improve the health and wellbeing of the Gypsy/Traveller community in Aberdeenshire. The report presented to the Gypsy/Traveller Sub Committee of the 20 June 2018, providing an update on Gypsy/Traveller health and</p>	

				<p>wellbeing has been presented to partnership groups.</p> <p>The report identified the need to address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary Care</li> <li>• Dental Care</li> <li>• Continuity of care</li> <li>• Expectations</li> <li>• Mental Health</li> </ul> <p>A meeting has been arranged with George Howie, Principal Health Improvement Officer, to progress the actions. Specific actions will be included in this action plan.</p>	
<p><b>Outcome: Better and more constructive relationships are developed between Gypsy/Travellers and settled communities</b></p>					
13	<p>Combat prejudice against the Gypsy/Traveller community, including, by providing information about culture, history and needs, whenever opportunity arises</p>	<p>Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>A Cultural Awareness Pack and a DVD are to be developed, with input from Education Services. Gypsy/Traveller Cultural Awareness training session for the Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer to be arranged with David Donaldson of Article 12. Officers should 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</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>Strategic Housing Officer/Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<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 to be reported to Gypsy/Traveller Sub-Committee on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2018.</p>	
15	<p>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.</p>	<p>Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>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</p>	
16	<p>Raise awareness of the Aberdeenshire Council's Prejudice and Discrimination reporting process and encourage Gypsy/Travellers to report incidences of Hate Crime.</p>	<p>Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Under discussion at the Gypsy/Traveller Interagency Group. Training arranged on Third Party Reporting for the Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer and Strategic Housing Officer. Exploring the impact of GDPR. Updated <u>Prejudice Incident Reporting</u> information is on the Aberdeenshire Council website.</p>	

17	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.	
18	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 <sup>th</sup> September 2018. The year of Young People has been supported by Officers.	

**Completed Actions**

<b>Outcome: The needs of Gypsy Travellers are met by more informed and joined-up planning of service delivery from Aberdeenshire Council and partner agencies</b>					
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	



