

COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

GYPSY/TRAVELLER SUB-COMMITTEE

WOODHILL HOUSE, ABERDEEN, 21 NOVEMBER, 2018

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

Also in attendance: Councillor M Ford.

Apologies: Councillor M Ewenson

Officers: Housing Manager (Strategy) (A Macleod), Strategic Housing Officer (L Hamilton), Education Support Officer (S Sutherland), Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer (D Faithfull), Inspector S McDermott (Police Scotland), Principal Solicitor (Democratic Services) (R O'Hare), and Senior Committee Officer (N 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. STATEMENT ON EQUALITIES

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

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

3. MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE OF 20 JUNE, 2018

There had been circulated and were **approved** as a correct records, the Minutes of Meetings of the Sub-Committee of 5 September and 12 October, 2018.

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

With reference to the Minute of Meeting of the Sub-Committee of 6 September, 2017 (Item 4), there was circulated a report dated 23 October, 2018, by the Housing Manager (Strategy) on the Action Plan for the Gypsy/Traveller Sub-Committee. At the outset, the Principal Solicitor (Democratic Services) gave a verbal update on the current legal position in respect of North Esk Park.

Thereafter, the Housing Manager (Strategy) introduced the report and provided an update on each outcome within the Action Plan.

Specific agreed actions arising therefrom included:

Outcome	Update
2	The protocol to be viewed by the Sub-Committee before being submitted to the Communities Committee
3	Officers from LDP Team be invited to a future meeting of Sub-Committee. Consideration be given for the opportunities for the Sub-Committee to identify to suitable site(s) for the LDP.
8	Updated Housing Workplan to be circulated to the Sub-Committee by email.
12	Update on the Action Plan for Health and Wellbeing to be submitted to the next meeting.
15	Sub-Committee to be regularly advised of any cross agency media coverage and joint responses to press enquiries.
18	The Aberdeenshire Children and Young People's Charter for Gyps/Traveller Communities to be circulated to members of the Sub-Committee; and thereafter monitoring take place.

Thereafter, the Sub-Committee **agreed** to continue to monitor the Action Plan at future meetings.

5. RACE EQUALITY ACTION PLAN

There was circulated a report dated 23 October, 2018, by the Director of Infrastructure Services on "A Fairer Scotland for All, Race Equality Action Plan 2017-2021".

The report explained that the Scottish Government had established a Ministerial Working Group to determine priorities for action and drive forward the changes required to start making improvements for Gypsy/Travellers across a range of issues. Action 14 of the Gypsy/Traveller Sub-Committee Action Plan made reference to the actions in "A Fairer Scotland for All, Race Equality Action Plan 2017-2021", which were being addressed by the Ministerial Working Group. It was agreed that this should be used as a means to drive forward action at a local level as well as to continue to enhance joint working at a regional level.

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

- (1) to acknowledge the the Scottish Government " A Fairer Scotland for All; Race Equality Action Plan 2017-2012"; and
- (2) that Action 3 and Action 8 from the Race Equality Action Plan be added into the Gypsy/Traveller Sub-Committee Action Plan.

6. REVIEW OF AIKEY BRAE TRAVELLERS SITE, OLD DEER

With reference to the Minute of Meeting of the Sub-Committee of 12 October, 2018 (Item 3), there was circulated a report dated 24 October, 2018, by the Director of Infrastructure Services.

The report reminded the Sub-Committee that is was agreed at the meeting on 12 October, 2018 that a report be submitted to the next meeting to review the provision onsite, further

requirements and to explore options for extending the opening periods for Aikey Brae and Greenbanks in the future.

The report further explained that the site was opened on 8 May, 2018, on the basis of a maximum stay of two weeks, unless otherwise agreed. The site became well used and it was apparent that the Travellers' preference was to remain on site for longer periods of time. The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer carried out surveys with the residents and they suggested it would be preferable if facilities could be upgraded to make the site more attractive to Gypsy/Travellers which would contribute to improved health outcomes for the families on site.

The report went on to summarise the feedback received on management arrangements and facilities at Aikey Brae. The report concluded by highlighting that, in light of the feedback, officers had been working with Property Services to investigate various options. This would be reported upon at the next meeting to assess the viability of proposed facility upgrades. In addition further engagement would take place regarding extending opening periods for local authority provision in Aberdeenshire and this would also be reported to the next meeting.

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

- (1) to acknowledge the feedback from users of the Aikey Brae Site since the opening in May 2018; and
- (2) that a further report be submitted to the next meeting of the Sub-Committee compiling the various comments and specifically addressing the possibility of extending the opening period of the site.

7. PROPOSED DATES OF MEETINGS IN 2019

The Sub-Committee **agreed** that the following meetings take place in 2019 (all at 10.00am):

13 February
19 June
4 September
20 November

