

Briefing Note for IEAG Meeting on 8th October 2013

Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople Site Allocations Plan Update

Background

The purpose of the Site Allocations Plan is to identify land for the development of permanent and transit residential accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers and sites for Travelling Showpeople to meet identified need in Bath and North East Somerset. The District does not currently have a permanent site for travellers although it does have temporary sites.

The Plan is still in its preparatory stages - consultation on Preferred Options took place Summer 2012.

Cabinet confirmed the need for a review of the process its meeting in September 2012 which included the following tasks:

- to update the assessment of need for pitches to establish the level of need for 5 and 10 year supply of sites in accordance with Planning for Traveller Sites;
- to review the site selection criteria;
- to review the scope for major development sites to include provision for Gypsy and Traveller sites;
- to review capacity to accommodate the travelling communities outside the Green Belt, including opportunities for provision in neighbouring local authorities in accordance with the duty to cooperate;
- to consider the results of the 2012 options consultation and assess the suitability of the 3 remaining sites; and
- to assess the additional sites suggested through the 2012 Call for Sites, including a review of the District's existing unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller sites.

The updated Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) 2012 identifies the following need:

Need	Time Period	2012-2017	2018-2022	2023-2027	TOTAL (2012-2027)
Gypsy and Traveller		24	1	3	28
Travelling Showpeople		40	0	0	40
Transit		5	0	0	5

Update

Following consultation and call for sites in 2012, 27 additional sites were suggested for consideration by the Council.

As Reported to Cabinet in June 2013 work is continuing to assess the suitability of these sites - specialist work, including archaeological assessment and land contamination investigations, is on-going. Once site assessment work is complete the Council will have a comprehensive understanding of which sites are suitable, any constraints, and also the potential cost to develop individual sites.

Other work on the DPD is also progressing and key issues being addressed are summarised below:

- Co-operation with adjoining authorities to ensure a joint strategic approach to provision has been undertaken;
- Assessing the contribution that major development sites can make towards accommodating travelling communities;
- Investigating the scope to regularise existing Travelling Showpeople accommodation;

Working with adjoining authorities is required through the Duty to Co-operate. Inevitably the progressing this work is influenced by processes/timetables in the adjoining authorities e.g. progress is dependent on assessments of need being completed in Bristol and South Gloucestershire. This work is on-going.

The programme for the remaining stages of DPD preparation was set out in the June 2013 Cabinet Report (see below). This programme may need to be reviewed given the issues referred to above and as a result of delays in the Core Strategy process.

STAGE	DATE
Undertaking outstanding tasks	to December 2013
Prepare Draft Plan	Dec. to March 2014
Public consultation on Draft Plan	Spring 2014
Revise and submit Plan for Examination	Summer 2014
Examination in Public hearings	Autumn 2014
Consider Inspector's recommendations and Adopt	Winter 2014