

REPORT TO: POLICY COMMITTEE ON 30 APRIL 2008

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF SITES

BY: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 This report presents progress made to identify appropriate sites for Gypsies/ Travellers in Moray.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section A (64) of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to Gypsies/Travellers.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that the Policy Committee:-

- (i) **notes the work undertaken to identify alternative sites for Gypsies/Travellers in Moray; and**
- (ii) **agrees that a further report be presented to a future Committee in due course.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 On 29 August 2007, the Policy Committee agreed actions to identify potential alternative sites for Gypsies/Travellers (para 50 of the minute refers).
- 3.2 The Committee agreed that Councillor Eric McGillivray attend the working group established to identify and investigate potential site locations.

4. IDENTIFICATION OF SITES: PROGRESS

- 4.1 Four meetings of the group have been held since August 2007. At the first meeting in December 2007, a total of 34 potential sites were tabled for consideration. These included sites previously considered, but discounted earlier for various reasons.
- 4.2 The 34 sites were considered against baseline criteria, which included health and safety issues, proximity to local services, compliance with planning policies and guidelines, and affordability. Of the 34, 8 sites were identified for further consideration.
- 4.3 Of the shortlisted sites, 3 have proved to be unsuitable, due to ownership or planning issues. The remaining 5 have been visited, from which 3 are regarded as unsuitable due to development, ownership and planning problems. Two sites remain under consideration, but further planning and

contaminated land appraisals are required. The sites at present are contrary to the extant and emerging plan, but could be an acceptable departure/application dependent on works to be carried out.

4.4 At the meeting on 4 April 2008, the working group noted the ownership of the 2 sites and some of the specific issues which would require consideration for planning consent. Further work is being undertaken, as a result of this, to enable both sites to progress to a planning application stage at a later date.

4.5 Meanwhile, consideration will be given to any other sites that are identified.

5. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

a) Corporate Development Plan/Community Plan/Service Improvement Plan

The Council's Local Housing Strategy identifies the need to plan and provide suitable stopping places for Gypsies/Travellers in Moray.

b) Policy and Legal

The proposals in this report will assist the Council in meeting requirements of the Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended), The Human Rights Act 1998, and standards set by the Scottish Housing Regulator through Section 79 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and in particular standard AS 6.1 Sites for Gypsy/Travellers.

c) Resources (Financial, Risks, Staffing and Property)

There are no specific resource issues at this stage. Budgetary provision for the acquisition/development of two sites is contained within the Council's Capital Programme. There are no staffing or property implications associated with this report.

d) Consultations

Consultations regarding this report have been carried out with Cllr Eric McGillivray, the Director of Community Services, the Chief Housing Officer, the Head of Estates, and members of the working group tasked with site identification.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 This report sets out the progress made to date to identify potential areas for transit sites provision for Gypsies/Travellers in Moray.

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Background Papers: Held by author
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