

12 JULY 2007

NOTICE OF MOTION

PROVIDING SITES FOR GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS

“This council notes the difficulties caused by the lack of permanent sites for gypsies and travellers in England and Wales, which has led inescapably to gypsies and travellers setting up informal campsites in Brighton and Hove.

It acknowledges the harm caused to the health, well-being and education of gypsies and travellers and their families who are constantly on the move because of an acute shortage of permanent sites. It further notes the cost to the city’s council taxpayers of clearing up the sites and making good the environmental damage caused.

It also recognises that successive national governments have contributed to this situation by failing to create a national strategy and funding for the provision of sites for gypsies and travellers.

It also notes that work on a regional strategy has been carried out on this issue and looks forward to discussing any recommendations for the provision of sites in the South East, in general, and Brighton and Hove, in particular.

It therefore calls on the Government to:

- Place a legal duty on local authorities to provide permanent sites for gypsies and travellers within a national and regional strategy and within an agreed timescale;
- Make adequate funding available to provide the sites;
- Ensure gypsies and travellers and the organisations that represent them are involved in agreeing the plans for a national and regional network;
- Provide adequate funding to upgrade and improve existing sites;
- Involve the gypsy and traveller community in the management of new and existing sites;
- As an interim measure, pay for the clean-up operations following unofficial encampments.

Furthermore, it calls on this council to:

- Request the Chair of the Environment Committee to consider the benefits of identifying potential sites ahead of the confirmation of the regional strategy;
- Seek the support of the city’s three MPs and the Local Government Association in its approaches to the Government on this issue.”

Proposed by: Cllr Bill Randall

Seconded by: Cllr Georgia Wrighton