

Decision No: CAB21 – 31/07/2008

Forward Plan No: 2087

This record relates to Agenda Item 48 on the agenda for the Decision-Making

RECORD OF SPECIAL CABINET KEY DECISION

DECISION-MAKER:	CABINET
PORTFOLIO AREA:	ENVIRONMENT
SUBJECT:	PARTIAL REVIEW OF THE SOUTH EAST PLAN: MEETING THE NEEDS OF GYPSIES & TRAVELLERS
AUTHOR:	JUDITH MACHO

THE DECISION

- (1) That the proposals to meet the current identified accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers within Brighton & Hove be approved.
- (2) That the preferred site for the provision of a permanent Gypsy and Travellers site with up to 14 pitches, be within the former BMX site off Wilson Avenue, East Brighton.
- (3) That the granting of Landlord's consent for the use of the land for a permanent Travellers Site with up to 14 pitches be approved and;
- (4) That the making of an application for 100% grant to the Department of Communities and Local Government be approved.

REASON FOR THE DECISION

- 1) The Government recognises that there are not enough suitable sites to meet the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers. The lack of authorised sites has led to an increase in unauthorised encampments. Therefore more sites are required in order to meet the need for accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers and to reduce the level of unauthorised encampments.
- 2) The Housing Act 2004 requires local authorities to assess the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and have a strategy that sets out how any identified needs are to be met. Brighton & Hove City Council took part in a sub-regional Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) in 2005 as part of the Housing Needs survey. The GTAA study looked at the accommodation needs and aspirations of Gypsies and Travellers in East Sussex and Brighton & Hove.

3) Circular 01/06: Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites establishes a new planning framework to help increase site provision to meet the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers, reduce the number of unauthorised sites and promote good relations with the settled community. Regional Spatial strategies, including the South East Plan, will identify the number of pitches required in each local authority area in light of local assessments of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation need.

4) The South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA) is undertaking a partial review of the South East Plan specifically to consider Gypsy and Traveller pitch requirements for the South East Region. Brighton & Hove City Council has worked closely with its GTAA partners; district and borough councils in East Sussex and East Sussex County Council, and has submitted advice to SEERA regarding additional provision of permanent pitches for Gypsies and Travellers in the GTAA area.

5) Advice submitted in October 2007 states that there is a need for up to 14 permanent pitches in Brighton & Hove. The final pitch requirements to be included in the South East Plan may be slightly different to this figure. However the recommendation in this report is for a site with up to 14 pitches.

6) SEERA will develop their Preferred Option(s) for pitch numbers and distribution once negotiations are complete and a formal consultation period is planned for Sept – Nov 2008. Currently options to be consulted on give figures of between 11 to 15 pitches for Brighton & Hove.

7) Circular 1/2006 requires local authorities to plan for Gypsy and Traveller sites by identifying suitable sites within their Development Plan Documents to meet the pitch requirements for their area as set out in Regional Spatial Strategies. As with all forms of housing / accommodation requirements set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy and Local development Framework, the Council must ensure this is “ deliverable “ (as stated in Planning Policy Document 3).

8) Circular 1/2006 also states that local authorities should bring forward site provision ahead of the strategic planning process where there is unmet need. The Department for Communities and Local Government has a Gypsy and Traveller Sites Grant which local authorities can bid for to refurbish or build new sites although the continuation of this funding has not been confirmed.

DETAILS OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

A comprehensive and robust site search exercise has been carried out across the City. The search adopts a “sequential approach“ and initially considers sites within the city’s defined “ built-up area “ boundary then sites on the urban fringe and only then sites falling within nationally designated areas of landscape importance such as AONB/Proposed National Park. The search has been guided by 3 main factors; site size, site availability and planning considerations. 42 sites were tested against planning criteria in the adopted local plan policy HO17 and the emerging Core strategy (Revised Preferred Option) policy CP14 “Provision for Gypsies and

Travellers". Please see Appendix 1 of the report for details.

OTHER RELEVANT MATTERS CONCERNING THE DECISION

None

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

CONFIRMED AS A TRUE RECORD:

We certify that the decision this document records was made in accordance with the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000 and is a true and accurate record of that decision

Date:

31 July 2008

Decision Maker:

Councillor Vanessa Brown
Deputy Leader of the Council

Signed:



Proper Officer:

31 July 2008

Mark Wall, Head of Democratic Services

Signed:



SCRUTINY

Note: This decision will come into force at the expiry of 5 working days from the date of the meeting at which the decision was taken subject to any requirement for earlier implementation of the decision.

Or: This decision is urgent and not subject to call-in (date of CE's agreement to urgency of decision).

Call-In Period

1-7 August 2008

Date of Call-in *(if applicable) (this suspends implementation)*

1 August 2008

Call-in Procedure completed *(if applicable)*

Call-in heard by *(if applicable)*

Results of Call-in *(if applicable)*