

Final Draft Ipswich Local Plan

Gypsies and Travellers Topic Paper

June 2020

Planning and Development
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IPSWICH
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This paper sets out to explain the Borough response to gypsy and travelers permanent and short stay pitch provision. Within Suffolk, transit/short stay provision is a collective responsibility between all Suffolk authorities, while permanent site provision is the responsibility of the individual local authorities.
- 1.2 Arrangements have been put in place to address provision, through the Ipswich Strategic Planning Authorities (ISPA) Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) if individual authorities are not able to address their own identified need which ISPA authorities have collectively signed up to. This includes Ipswich Borough Council (IBC); East Suffolk; Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils (which are joint working authorities but not formally amalgamated) and Suffolk County Council.
- 1.3 An officer group meets regularly to discuss the strategic approach to key planning issues and the ISPA Board convenes when there are matters of decision to be made.
- 1.4 The ISPA SoCG is updated as appropriate as each local authority member is in the final stages of plan preparation for submission to the Secretary of State. So far, more recently, it has been updated for the submission of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (located in East Suffolk. East Suffolk is an amalgamation of Suffolk Coastal District Council and Waveney District Council which took place formally on 1 March 2019), and has been updated for the submission of the final draft Ipswich Local Plan.
- 1.5 The ISPA authorities collaborately commissioned the identification of housing need for gypsies and travelers through the production of 'The Gypsy, Traveler, Travelling Show People and Boat Dwellers Accommodation Needs Assessment', (May 2017).¹
- 1.6 This was a very comprehensive study and included stakeholder consultation with the identified groups in need including travelling and gypsy communities for both permanent pitch provision and transit provision; population trends and data; identification of specific characteristics of existing provision; and, conclusions relating to the evidence on how to facilitate new provision and transit provision and requirements for each constituent authority over the plan period and on a 5 year supply basis.

2. Identified Need in Ipswich Borough

- 2.1 Ipswich Borough Council (IBC) has a 5-year Local Plan supply of 13 permanent pitches and an annualised additional permanent pitch requirement of four pitches. The additional need between 2016 and 2036 is 27 pitches. – see Appendix 1
- 2.2 The lack of transit provision was identified by families as being a key issue; some permanent sites are too large and there was generally a need for more sites to be made available. Families spoke of how small family sites work better and these are the

¹

https://www.ipswich.gov.uk/sites/default/files/accommodation_needs_assessment_final_report_may_2017.pdf

type of sites families primarily want. They spoke of how they feel safer on smaller sites, and how they are easier to manage and maintain. They also commented on how smaller sites are more accepted by the local settled community and lead to better integration.²

- 2.3 5 transit sites/emergency stopping places are needed over twenty years across the whole study area (2016-36).³
- 2.4 No specific needs have been identified for Ipswich to meet any identified accommodation needs for boat people or travelling show people. Travelling show people tend to have their own sites for storing circus tents, and caravans etc during the winter months and use the sites year after year for performances across the country on a temporary basis.

3. Local Planning Authority Level

Procedurally

Plan-making

- 3.1 In terms of plan-making, IBC has been flexible in accommodating changes identified through various plan stage representation. The National Federation Gypsy Liaison Groups made a representation at the Preferred Options stage of plan-making. (See Appendix 1).
- 3.2 A number of comments were made by the Environment Agency and the one from the Suffolk Constabulary at preferred options stage in addition to the National Federation above. With reference to the comment that the requirement for pitches needs to be kept under review this is agreed. Additional wording has been added in the supporting text of Policy CS11 (Gypsy and Traveller Accomodation) accordingly.⁴
- 3.3 The criteria in the policy have been designed around the content of the national policy guidance on gypsies and travellers and the accommodation needs assessment guidance which reflects best practice. Paragraph 8.147 acknowledges local anecdotal evidence of preferences for gypsies and travellers for smaller sites to provide pitches for family groups. The Environment Agency suggests more attention is given to flood risk for clarity and the wording has been amended accordingly.
- 3.4 The Regulation 19 Draft Ipswich Local Plan reads as follows to reflect these comments in the lower-case text amendment to include a new paragraph 8.139 which reads:

'8.139 Local housing authorities will continue to decide how best to undertake their duties to assess the needs of all their residents and those who resort in their area. This will be in accordance with the legal obligations in the Equality Act 2010. National planning policy for Gypsies and Travellers is set out in Planning Policy for Traveller

² The Gypsy, Traveler, Travelling Show People and Boat Dwellers Accommodation Needs Assessment', (May 2017, Section S20

³ Ditto papr. S27

⁴ Reg 22 Consultation Statement, pages 186 and 187

Sites (2015) and requires planning authorities to use their evidence to plan positively to meet the needs of Gypsies & Travellers and Travelling Show People and Boat People.'

- 3.3 In addition, through the Statement of Common Ground emerging with East Suffolk, there has been changes to Policy CS11. Although East Suffolk are supportive of the general policy approach in the Regulation 19 Final Draft Local Plan and supports the Borough Council looking to identify sites in the Borough to meet the Borough need, the ISPA SoCG states that each local planning authority will meet its own need for permanent pitches for Gypsies and Travellers and should have a policy setting out how this will be delivered in its own area. The SoCG goes on to state that where the capacity to accommodate pitches cannot be met within the local authority's own boundary, a comprehensive re-assessment of deliverability will be undertaken and the ISPA Board will provide the forum to collectively consider how the unmet need can be met within the ISPA, subsequently to be determined through each local authority's local plan.
- 3.4 In addition, in relation to transit sites, East Suffolk states that although the Policy includes a reference to developing a short stay site, the countywide emphasis between Ipswich and Felixstowe this has changed emphasis. The authorities in Suffolk are working together to deliver sites to meet the needs identified in the Accommodation Needs Assessment (this identified a need for two to three sites in the study area which covers the ISPA authorities plus the former Waveney part of East Suffolk).
- 3.5 The policy should therefore appropriately apply some flexibility in meeting the needs for short stay stopping sites in order to be effective and consistent with the approach adopted in the ISPA Statement of Common Ground.
- 3.6 Policy CS11 (Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation) has been amended to better comply with the ISPA Statement of Common Ground, in terms of the approach to transit provision. It is proposed that the third from bottom paragraph in the policy is amended to read:
- '.....The Council will work with Suffolk County Council **and other local authorities within Suffolk** ~~to develop a South Suffolk transit (short stay) site. between Ipswich and Felixstowe~~ to **deliver identified needs for short stay stopping sites within Suffolk**.*
- 3.7 This approach to transit accommodation has been accepted in a signed Statement of Common between Ipswich Borough Council and East Suffolk Council which has been submitted to the Secretary of State.
- 3.8 In addition, Policy CS11, has been amended to better explain the Borough's approach to finding permanent pitches to meet the needs of gypsies and travelers in Ipswich. It is clear, that whilst the small family pitch site at Henniker Road is well integrated with the settled community, the majority of the pitch provision in the Borough has been at West Meadow. This is a large site and over the years has been subject to police intervention. The anecdotal picture in the Assessment indicates that for families, this large site may be unsuitable and that provision of smaller sites catering for around 3 or 4 families is more likely to lead to more successful provision and also given the example of Henniker Road, are more likely to successfully assimilate with the settled community.

3.9 The AQA states:

‘.....it was generally acknowledged that there is a lack of permanent accommodation provision throughout the study area and surrounding areas. Much of the accommodation need is due to growing families on existing pitches leading to overcrowding. It was considered that there is a need to ensure that accommodation provision is situated close to services and facilities. Stakeholders recognised that cultural identity and lifestyles of different groups may impact on the type of accommodation required.’ And

‘The main issues stated by families were that some sites are too large, there is a lack of transit provision, and there is a need for more sites. According to respondents, small family sites appear to work well avoiding conflict that can arise on larger sites with many different family groups.’⁵ ‘ Families spoke of how small family sites work better and these are the type of sites families primarily want. They spoke of how they feel safer on smaller sites, and how they are easier to manage and maintain. They also commented on how smaller sites are more accepted by the local settled community...’

3.10 In terms of the large Ipswich site at West Meadow consultation revealed in the AQA that:

‘The large local authority adjoining sites in Ipswich which contain 42 pitches was cited as one where there have been management issues due to its size. Stakeholders suggested that the site is at least twice the size of a manageable site. It is occupied by families who do not always get on but remain due to a lack of authorised accommodation elsewhere. Since the consultations, there have been incidents on both sites. It was suggested that ideally, local authorities should assist in the provision of both privately owned and publicly owned sites, and not build sites that are too big to manage or maintain.’⁶

3.11 The Council therefore has a dual approach to meeting need. On one hand, the Council’s approach is led through the development management process for small sites catering for around 3-4 families. This is to better reflect the anecdotal evidence received by the consultants who prepared the AQA. There is a precedent for such an approach which reflects the Waveney Local Plan (2019) approach. This is being supported through a bespoke piece of work which looks at developing these needs further which is in the process of being commissioned through the same consultants who provided the 2017 AQA.

3.12 Should sites not come forward within 5 years of adoption, it is anticipated that the Borough will undertake a focused review to identify smaller sites which can be incorporated into a new local plan review.

3.13 It is proposed that changes be made to Policy CS11 (Gypsies and Travellers) to more clearly reflect the Council’s position on permanent sites. This is reflected in a draft Statement of Common Ground that is being negotiated with Babergh and Mid Suffolk

⁵ AQA 2017 S20

⁶ AQA 2017 para 4.9

District Councils. The changes to Policy CS 11 as composed by the Borough are as follows (bold are new words, and striked out words are proposed to be removed):

'POLICY CS11: GYPSY AND TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION

Provision will be found within the Ipswich Borough ~~where possible~~ for additional permanent pitches to meet the need for 27 permanent pitches to 2036, as identified through the Gypsy, Traveller, Travelling Showpeople and Boat Dwellers Accommodation Needs Assessment 2017. ~~Where sites cannot be found within the Borough, the Council will work with neighbouring authorities to secure provision.~~

It is anticipated that provision for smaller sites for family groups (which better meet the identified needs of gypsies and the travelling community). This will ensure greater social cohesion with the settled community and this is the preferred option. It is anticipated that this will be delivered through normal development management functions.

The Council's identified need is for 27 permanent pitches between 2016-2036. The 5 year supply is for 13 permanent pitches which annually requires, 3 pitches a year.

If progress does not move forward, the Council will conduct a focussed review within 5 years and the results of this would feed into the next local plan as positive allocations.

Sites currently used by Gypsies and Travellers are identified on the policies map and are protected for that use.

Applications for the provision of permanent pitches will be considered against the following criteria:

- a. The existing level of local provision and need for sites;
- b. The availability (or lack) of alternative accommodation for the applicants; and
- c. Other personal circumstances of the applicant, including the proposed occupants must meet the definition of Gypsy or Traveller.
- d. The site should be located:
 - i. where it would be well served by the road network; and
 - ii. where it would be well related to basic services including the public transport network.
- e. The site should be:
 - i. accessible safely on foot, by cycle and by vehicle;
 - ii. free from flood risk and significant contamination;
 - iii. safe and free from pollution;
 - iv. capable of being cost effectively drained and serviced, including with waste disposal and recycling facilities;

v. proportionate in size to any nearby settlements, to support community cohesion; and

vi. where possible, located on previously developed land.

f. The site should not have a significant adverse impact on:

i. the residential amenity of immediate or close neighbours;

ii. the appearance and character of the open countryside;

iii. sites designated to protect their nature conservation, ecological networks, geological or landscape qualities;

iv. heritage assets including their setting; and

v. the physical and social infrastructure of local settlements.

Site identification will be carried out in consultation with the Gypsy and Traveller and settled communities. Site size and design will be in accordance with government guidance.....⁷

3.14 Any suggested policy changes will of course require an Sustainability Assessment (SA) as part of the whole Plan SA to ensure that there are no negative impacts that arise from these suggested changes.

Potential Site Investigations for transit accommodation

3.15 There were several sites identified in 2014 Suffolkwide which were put out to consultation.⁷ Suffolk's public authorities have identified seven possible locations for the creation of three new short-stay sites for Gypsies and travellers. This was a response to 210 unauthorised encampments being set up since 2007. The proposed sites are in or near Felixstowe, Ipswich, Kentford, Wortham, Stanton and Eye and were made jointly by the county council, the seven district councils and Suffolk's police and crime commissioner (PCC). These sites were:

- Layby off A143 opposite Shepherds Lane, Wortham;
- Land between Candlet Road and Treetops, Felixstowe;
- Layby on Felixstowe Road, Levington, south of junction with Bridge Road;
- Former Little Chef site, Kentford, off A14;
- Former Chippings Dump, Upthorpe Road, Stanton;
- Former Little Chef site, off A14 by the Orwell Bridge, Ipswich; and
- A140 junction with Castleton Way, Eye.

3.16 None of these sites lie within the Ipswich Borough boundary.

3.17 In addition, there was a Call for Sites consultation, between 23 September 2015 – 16 November 2015 throughout Suffolk with the aim of identifying, three Short Stay

⁷ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-suffolk-28867656>

Stopping Sites across the county.⁸ This implies that none of the sites identified in 2014 had proven successful.

- 3.18 Work on taking forward transit provision is coordinated through a High-Level Steering Group. As part of this group it was agreed that a part-time member of staff (hosted by East Suffolk) be appointed to take forward the work to identify transit sites and there are a number of sites that are currently under investigation. This post has been filled and is jointly funded by all of the authorities through housing budgets.
- 3.19 Following a High-Level Steering Group Meeting in the week commencing 25 March 2019 it was agreed that this group be split into two elements:
- one involving the reinstatement of the Norfolk/Suffolk Forum - this could become the operational meeting where we get to the detail of issues such as unauthorised encampments, case studies, general updates. This group would involve those who are maybe in more operational roles and become an operational level group; and
 - a more focused high-level strategy group which would be the group for more strategic discussions and decision making. This will include reviewing data and trends, monitoring the contract of the service etc. This meeting will take place every 6 months. (see Appendix 2).
- 3.20 Much of the delays in progress has been caused by staff capacity issues which the new arrangements are designed to address. However, since 2018, an operational manager has been appointed who sits in Norfolk County Council and their role includes chairing the Norfolk and Suffolk Gypsies, Roma and Travelling communities in Norfolk and Suffolk. This also considers other issues such as the welfare of the communities; education and health issues.

Permanent Pitch Provision

- 3.21 The Borough has been involved in finding sites through local plan allocation and planning permission for a number of years. A discussion paper was prepared for the ISPA Board which considered pitch provision on 10 September 2012 and secured a joint identification of need arising be commissioned. This became the 2013 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment and then was superseded by the 2017 needs assessment prepared on the behalf of the ISPA authorities.
- 3.22 A permanent site was proposed in the preferred options draft version of the 2017 adopted Ipswich Local Plan - Site IP261 – Land at River Hill around 2014. However, due to pressure from residents and others, this site did not proceed to the Regulation 19 final draft Ipswich Local Plan and therefore to the Secretary of State for Examination.
- 3.23 The existing site at West Meadows is a large site containing 41 pitches. Anecdotal evidence of preferences in the Gypsy and Traveller community locally is for smaller sites to provide pitches for family groups. The West Meadows site has been re-laid out following a number of police interventions on site caused through difficulties between the various travelling groups on the site and their proximity to each other. The

⁸ <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/assets/community-and-safety/gypsies-and-travellers/Gypsy-and-Traveller-Booklet.pdf>

management of this site has also changed hands from the Borough Council over the years.

- 3.24 The Henniker Road, a small site which was purchased privately and is lived on by two families is well integrated into the local community and is a success story that the Borough would like to repeat.
- 3.25 In addition, there has been some discussion regarding gypsy and traveler provision in the light of the Inspector's report into the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan by ISPA members.
- 3.26 Suffolk authorities are also guided by the 2012 Gypsy and Traveller Strategy developed between Norfolk and Suffolk Authorities.⁹

4 Unauthorised Sites

- 4.1 Unauthorised sites are monitored through the Ipswich BC private housing team since 2018. Prior to this they were monitored by the Council's Environmental Health team who dealt with unauthorised sites. The position is regularly reported through the Council's Authority Monitoring Report.
- 4.2 Over the last two years, the Borough Council has had 7 unauthorised encampments in 2018/19 and 8 in 2019/20. The Council record information on unauthorised encampments to enable partners and the Borough to understand the potential need. A procedure has been agreed across Suffolk to deal with unauthorised encampments through the High-Level Steering Group which is outlined in Appendix 4 to this statement. The procedure has been developed to address the need for effective management of unauthorised encampments whilst ensuring the rights of Gypsies and Travellers and settled communities.

5 The Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Group

- 5.1 The gypsy and traveler liaison group is in place to ensure that the voice of gypsies and travelers is heard and that their health, education and other needs are assisted.¹⁰

Conclusion

- 5.2 The Borough in terms of planning policy is taking a development management approach to the delivery of pitches to meet the identified needs of gypsies and travelers for small sites. This is being supplemented through a bespoke piece of work in conjunction with the consultant who prepared the ISPA authorities AQA on gypsies and travelers to further drill down to help meet the needs for Ipswich. Additionally, if this is not successful within 5 years the Borough will do a bespoke review and allocate small sites within the next local plan as part of plan review.
- 5.3 The Borough also works closely with other authorities in both Suffolk and Norfolk to provide strategic and operational support to the gypsy and travelling community.

⁹ <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/assets/community-and-safety/gypsies-and-travellers/Joint-Strategy-for-Gypsies-and-Travellers.pdf>

¹⁰ <http://www.nationalgypsytravellerfederation.org/planning.html>

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Five-year estimate of pitch provision and total to 2036 for Ipswich

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https://www.ipswich.gov.uk/sites/default/files/accommodation_needs_assessment_final_report_may_2017.pdf

ANA 2017

Ipswich (Gypsy and Traveller Pitches)

Table A.3: Five year estimate of the need for permanent/residential site pitches (2016-2021)	
1) Current occupied permanent / residential site pitches	39
<i>Current residential supply</i>	
2) Number of unused residential pitches available	5
3) Number of existing pitches expected to become vacant through mortality 2016-2021	1
4) Number of family units on sites expected to leave the area in the next 5 years	0
5) Number of family units on sites expected to move into housing in the next 5 years	2
6) Residential pitches planned to be built or to be brought back into use 2016-2021	0
7) Less pitches with temporary planning permission	0
Total Supply	8
<i>Current residential need: Pitches</i>	
8) Family units (on pitches) seeking residential pitches in the area, 2016-2021, excluding those already counted as moving due to overcrowding in step 12	7
9) Family units on unauthorised encampments requiring residential pitches in the area	0
10) Family units on unauthorised developments requiring residential pitches in the area	0
11) Family units currently overcrowded on pitches seeking residential pitches in the area, excluding those containing an emerging family unit	1
12) New family units expected to arrive from elsewhere	0
13) New family formations expected to arise from within existing family units on sites	9
Total Need	17
<i>Current residential need: Housing</i>	
14) Family units in housing but with a psychological aversion to housed accommodation	4
Total Need	21
<i>Balance of Need and Supply</i>	
Total Need	21
Less total supply	8
Total Additional Pitch Requirement	13
Annualised Additional Pitch Requirement	3

Source: ANA 2017

Table A4: Twenty year summary (2016 – 2036)							
	Base Numbers	Additional need 2016-2021	Additional need 2021-2026	Additional need 2026-2031	Additional need 2031-2036	Additional need 2016-2036	Numbers as at 2036
Residential pitches	44	13	4	5	5	27	71

Source: ANA 2017

There are 39 occupied pitches and 5 vacant, which equals planning permission for 44.

Appendix 2 - The National Federation Gypsy Liaison Groups Representation and IBC response in the Regulation 22 Consultation Statement

No representation was made to the Regulation 19 consultation. In relation to the Reg.18 The following summary and the Borough's response was as follows:

25835	The National Federation of Gypsy Liaison Groups	<p>Elements of the policy need to be reconsidered.</p> <p>Firstly, the opening paragraph should acknowledge that the requirement for pitches will be kept under review in accordance with a regular update of the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment.</p> <p>Subdivision of the second set of criteria into 3 elements (a, b and c) is illogical and unnecessary and will lead to confusion (duplication).</p> <p>Criterion vi could be used to oppose otherwise acceptable proposals.</p> <p>The reference to government guidance is odd because there is no such guidance.</p> <p>Paragraph 8.132 is unclear as it advances additional criteria beyond the policy. We object to this.</p>
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How these comments have been taken into account in the Final Draft Local Plan:

With reference to the comment that the requirement for pitches needs to be kept under review this is agreed. Additional wording has been added in the supporting text accordingly.

The criteria in the policy have been designed around the content of the national policy guidance on gypsies and travellers and the accommodation needs assessment guidance which reflects best practice. Paragraph 8.137 acknowledges local anecdotal evidence of preferences for gypsies and travellers for smaller sites to provide pitches for family groups.

The Environment Agency suggests more attention is given to flood risk for clarity and the wording has been amended accordingly. (these changes were supported in response to Reg 19 consultation)

The relevant national guidance has been highlighted in the form of a new introductory paragraph 8.130. The definitions of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople have been added to the glossary for clarity.

Appendix 3 - Gypsy and Traveller High Level Steering Group notes and proposed forward direction

16 April 2019 08:34

From: Suffolk county council

Sent: 16 April 2019 08:34

To: <@eastsuffolk.gov.uk>; <suffolk.pnn.police.uk>; (Data, NCC) @norfolk.gov.uk>; <@eastsuffolk.gov.uk>; <@norfolk.gov.uk>; <@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk>; <@nhs.net> <@suffolk.gov.uk>; <@ipswich.gov.uk>; <@westsuffolk.gov.uk>; <@norfolk.gov.uk>; (names and individuals have been removed, each organization has at least two attendees)

Subject: RE: Gypsy and Traveller High Level Steering Group notes and proposed forward direction

Good morning all,

I hope you are all well today.

Following on from the below, if you have not already done so, please do send through your comments and feedback on the proposed future working of the group. Many thanks in advance.

Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Board Officer
Personal Assistant to Head of Localities and Partnerships
Personal Assistant Chair of the Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Board
Telephone:
Mob:



Public Health Suffolk

From:

Sent: 04 April 2019 13:05

To: <@eastsuffolk.gov.uk>; <suffolk.pnn.police.uk>; (Data, NCC) @norfolk.gov.uk>; <@eastsuffolk.gov.uk>; <@norfolk.gov.uk>; <@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk>; <@nhs.net> <@suffolk.gov.uk>; <@ipswich.gov.uk>; <@westsuffolk.gov.uk>; <@norfolk.gov.uk>; (names and individuals have been removed, each organization has at least two attendees)

Subject: Gypsy and Traveller High Level Steering Group notes and proposed forward direction

Good afternoon

I hope this email finds you well today.

Please find attached a copy of the notes from last week's meeting of the Gypsy and Traveller High Level Steering Group. Furthermore, please also find attached copy of the action plan which was agreed to be formed at the last meeting.

As per the minutes, it was agreed that xxxxx and I would have a think about the future workings as well as the membership for the group. As a result, please see below our thoughts:

- Reinststate the Norfolk and Suffolk Joint meetings. This could become the operational meeting where we get to the detail of issues such as unauthorised encampments, case studies, general updates. This group would involve those who are maybe in more operational roles. This group could meet every other month for example in Diss.

Proposed members of this group:

- ❖ – Chair
- ❖ xxx
- ❖ xxx
- ❖ xxx
- ❖ HO workers
- ❖ xxx

- We should continue with the GTHLS meeting. This group will be the group for more strategic discussions and decision making. This will include reviewing data and trends, monitoring the contract of the service etc. This meeting will take place every 6 months.

Proposed members of this group:

- ❖ - Chair
- ❖ xxx
- ❖ Cllr.
- ❖ xxx
- ❖ xxx
- ❖ xxx

Please do send in your comments and feedback to us so we can consider everyone's views! If you feel you need to attend both or have been allocated the wrong group, please let us know.

Best wishes

Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Board Officer
Personal Assistant to Head of Localities and Partnerships
Personal Assistant to Chair of the Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Board
Telephone: Mobile:

Appendix 4 - Ipswich Policy Area (IPA) Board Meeting - 10th September 2012; Item 5. Matters for Discussion; f) Gypsy and Traveller Site Provision;

Paper for consideration

Ipswich Policy Area (IPA) Board Meeting - 10th September 2012

Item 5. Matters for Discussion

f) Gypsy and Traveller Site Provision

Planning Policy for Traveller Sites

The Communities and Local Government (CLG) 'Planning Policy for Traveller Sites' was published on 23rd March 2012 and came into effect on 27th March 2012 at the same time as the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Circular 01/06: Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites and Circular 04/07: Planning for Travelling Showpeople have been cancelled. Planning Policy for Travellers Sites should be read in conjunction with the NPPF, including the implementation policies of that document.

One of the key Government aims in respect of traveller sites is that local planning authorities make their own assessment of need for the purposes of planning.

Local planning authorities should set pitch targets for gypsies and travellers and plot targets for traveling showpeople which address the likely permanent and transit site accommodation needs of travellers in their area, working collaboratively with neighbouring local planning authorities (para 8).

Subject to implementation arrangements at paragraph 28, if a local planning authority cannot demonstrate an up-to-date five year supply of deliverable sites, this should be a significant material consideration in any subsequent planning decision when considering applications for the grant of temporary planning permission. This policy applies to applications for temporary planning permission for traveller sites made 12 months after the policy came into effect, which is March 2013 (para 25).

It is important for the IPA board to ensure Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) are aware of the March 2013 deadline, as set out in CLG's 'Planning Policy for Traveller Sites', to identify a five year supply of sites. As after 27th March 2013 a five year supply will be a significant material consideration in determining the grant of temporary permissions for traveller sites.

Ipswich Core Strategy and Policies DPD – adopted December 2011

Policy CS11 – Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation

This policy *inter alia* states that provision will be found within Ipswich Policy Area to meet the additional pitch requirements of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) to 2021, and thereafter any further need as identified by the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA). Sites will be allocated through the Site Allocations and IP-One Area Action Plan Development Plan Documents.

In line with the RSS, policy CS11 also requires the Council to work with Suffolk County Council and neighbouring authorities to develop the South Suffolk transit site between Ipswich and Felixstowe.

The provisions of Ipswich Borough Council policy CS11 and the duty to cooperate, demonstrate the need to support collaborative planning across all authorities in the IPA in the identification of suitable sites to meet the needs of the Gypsy and Traveller community. The IPA board should be aware of the need for collaborative planning enabling each authority to meet their own and the joint needs as identified by the RSS and the GTAA update.

Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment Five Suffolk authorities update

An update to the five Suffolk authorities GTAA was commissioned in July 2012. This is a joint study for Mid Suffolk District Council, Babergh District Council, Suffolk Coastal District Council, Waveney District Council and Ipswich Borough Council. The draft study will be available by end of September 2012 and is expected to be finalised by October 2012. The study will assess future provision needs for plan making purposes, which will be used to inform site identification.

Ipswich Borough Council will prepare a further paper for the IPA Board once the results of the GTAA are made available.

Appendix 5 - Suffolk Unauthorised Encampment Procedure

Procedure Note

Unlawful Encampments

1. Complaint received, details taken and recorded as Service Request/Illegal Encampment. Insert Task: CH51 on M3 worksheet
2. Complete a Land Registry search to identify if it belongs to one of IBC's asset companies. If not IBC land our involvement stops (except to contact landowner. Notify them of encampment and establish landowner's position in dealing with the encampment).
3. Inform NSCRTS, complete initial notification form and email to NSGRTS@Norfolk.gov.uk and arrange to do a joint visit. Operations Manager, Cohesion Officer
4. Site visit same day (must go out in pairs), note exact location and take photos. Ask is there a reason for them being there e.g. ill health or break down. If possible, note the number of caravans and vehicles and any other information the council needs to be aware of, which could impact the encampment or the local community i.e. environment or behaviour risks, young children, animals, racing vehicles etc.
5. You must inform travellers they are illegally parked and should leave.
6. Update PEHO, Ops Manager of your visit and pass on your findings.
7. Phone legal - to let them know there is an encampment on your return.
8. Other contact we may need to call upon are;
 - Inform Suffolk Police.
 - Inform Area Health Authority (Welfare Office normally does this).
 - SCC Education (Welfare Office normally does this).
9. Prepare a witness statement , including photographs and site plans. Note: you must mark approx..location of caravans and vehicles on plans, plus outline IBC land or IBC asset land. Sign and pass onto legal.
10. The police have powers to move illegal encampments on if they are causing a significant problem to others or if they are abusive.
11. Welfare Officer arranges case conference but we may help out in arranging a meeting room if necessary. The case conference is to decide the MSCA.
12. Attend case conference. Legal prepares notice for service for issue at court and service thereafter.
17. NSGRTS will serve a copy on each caravan and entrance to the site and complete Appendix 2-Certificate of Service.
18. Check site prior to court date and if possible count number of vans and vehicles. Inform Legal if numbers have increased or decreased. If possible, record registration numbers of new vehicles.

19. On the morning of court, NSGRT must check site and count number of vans and vehicles. Inform Legal if numbers have increased or decreased. If possible, record registration numbers of new vehicles.
20. Attend court. Ensure court eviction notice has been stamped with court seal (Legal does this, gets Order and apply for Warrant of Eviction).
21. NSRGT will serve order on travellers in pairs and update PEHO/Op Manager.