

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – TUESDAY, 16 JANUARY 2018

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| Title of report | GYPSY AND TRAVELLER NEEDS ASSESSMENT |
| Key Decision | a) Financial No b) Community Yes |
| Contacts | Councillor Trevor Pendleton 01509 569746 trevor.pendleton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Strategic Director of Place 01530 454555 james.arnold@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Planning & Regeneration 01530 454782 jim.newton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk |
| Purpose of report | To confirm understanding of the evidence relating to the need for sites to accommodate gypsies, travellers, and travelling showpeople |
| Reason for decision | To conform with Policy H7 and supporting text of the adopted Local Plan |
| Council priorities | Homes and Communities |
| Implications: Financial/Staff Link to relevant CAT Risk Management Equalities Impact Screening | There are no resource implications to this report None A risk register was prepared and maintained to support the local plan while it was being prepared and progressed. This was held by the Project Board. An Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment was prepared to support the adopted Local Plan and a separate assessment has been undertaken in respect of the Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocations Development Plan Document. The provision of sites to meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers will directly benefit the gypsy and traveller community but also the settled population as it will reduce the likelihood of unauthorised sites. |

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| Human Rights | See above |
| Transformational Government | This assessment relates to the new ways in which Councils are being asked to deliver their services |
| Comments of Head of Paid Service | The Report is Satisfactory |
| Comments of Deputy Section 151 Officer | The Report is Satisfactory |
| Comments of Deputy Monitoring Officer | The Report is Satisfactory |
| Consultees | Local Plan Project Board |
| Background papers | Leicester City and Leicestershire Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment |
| Recommendations | <p>CABINET IS RECOMMENDED TO:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NOTE THE REQUIREMENT WITHIN THE SUPPORTING TEXT TO POLICY H7 – PROVISION FOR GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS AND TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLE - OF THE ADOPTED LOCAL PLAN THAT IN ORDER TO MEET IDENTIFIED NEED ... THE AUTHORITY IS COMMITTED TO PRODUCING A GYPSY AND TRAVELLER SITE ALLOCATIONS DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT; 2. NOTE THE LEICESTER AND LEICESTERSHIRE GYPSY AND TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION ASSESSMENT; AND 3. CONFIRM THAT REASONABLE STEPS SHOULD BE TAKEN TO ENSURE SUITABLE AND ADEQUATE PROVISION IS MADE TO MEET NEEDS |

1.0 EXISTING POLICY CONTEXT

- 1.1 The adopted Local Plan Policy H7 sets out the (then) evidenced need for gypsy and traveller pitches, as well as travelling showpeoples' plots, during the plan period. That evidence dated back to a study which was carried out in 2007 and refreshed in 2013, and was considered to be out of date in light of the August 2015 Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS), which notably redefined travellers. The supporting text to Policy H7 said that a new study had been commissioned. That new study had not been finalised at the time of the conclusion of the Local Plan Examination in Public Hearings.
- 1.2 The current need has been established by the Leicester City and Leicestershire Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment which was prepared by independent expert consultants on behalf of the Leicester & Leicestershire Councils (with the exception of Hinckley & Bosworth which already had its own up to date assessment).

In accordance with the supporting text of the adopted Local Plan, it is now incumbent on us to prepare a Development Plan Document, in order that needs are accommodated for gypsies, travellers, and travelling showpeople.

2.0 THE UP TO DATE EVIDENCE

- 2.1 The up to date study sets out the need for new sites, and this compares with the 2007 (refreshed in 2013) study and Local Plan Policy H7 as follows:

| | Local Plan Policy H7 | | Up to date study | |
|--------------|------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| | Gypsies and Travellers | Travelling Showpeople | Gypsies and Travellers | Travelling Showpeople |
| 2016* – 2031 | 41 | 9 | 5 | 18 |
| 2031 – 2036 | | | 1 | 2 |
| 2016* - 2036 | | | 6 | 20 |

*the 2007 (refreshed in 2013) study sets out need from 2017, and the up to date study sets out need from 2016. It is considered that the differences are not so great between one year as to render the comparison unreliable

- 2.2 It is noticeable that the requirement for gypsies and traveller pitches is significantly lower in the up to date study than it was in the evidence which supported the Local Plan. This is principally attributable to the changed definition of travellers, which was introduced by the 2015 PPTS. The requirement for showmen’s plots is substantially higher than previously.
- 2.3 The up to date study sets out that North West Leicestershire and Leicester City have each experienced the largest number of unauthorised encampments, with each having recorded 453 such unauthorised encampments between 1997 and 2016. This is substantially more than any other district or borough within Leicestershire. The report concludes that up to 63 transit pitches are needed in Leicestershire, with up to 20 pitches in this district.

3.0 CONCLUSION

- 3.1 There is clear evidence of an unmet need for sites to accommodate gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople, and an obligation on the Council to take all reasonable steps to identify suitable sites to meet robustly evidenced needs. To that end the adopted Local Plan includes a commitment to preparing a Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocations Development Plan Document, This will be the subject of a separate report to Council. Should it be necessary for the Council to bring forward a specific site then this will be subject to further reports.