

Council Position Statement – Gypsy and Travellers and Travelling Show People, Future Study work.

As set out in the Council's statement to Matter 3 Question 1, the Council are fully aware of the responsibilities to plan for the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Show people and on this basis the Council have an adopted policy within the Central Lancashire Core Strategy (Policy 8 Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Show People Accommodation). This policy allows the Council to deal appropriately with any applications received for new sites.

However, further to this the Council does recognise that a study will be required in order to assess the future needs for site provision beyond 2016. This process is under way and includes working with neighbouring Authorities and having dialogue with all other authorities within the Lancashire Sub Region. This communication occurs through meetings at a Director/Senior Management level (Lancashire Planning Officers Society - LPOS) and at an officer level through the quarterly meetings of the Development Policy Officers Group (DPOG) and Development Control Officer Group. At a Member level, the Central Lancashire Authorities also hold regularly JAC (Joint Advisory Group) meetings - the purpose of such meetings is to discuss cross boundary issues affecting the Central Lancashire Authorities and the sub region of Lancashire as a whole.

The need for Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Show People sites has been discussed at length at the recent LPOS and DPOG meetings.

Minutes from the recent DPOG meeting held on 10th January 2013 state the following: *'it was reported that Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Councils intend to work together to update the gypsies and traveller assessment. JS mentioned that there had been a very useful workshop arranged by Fylde for officers and members presented by PAS and LGA. One of the outcomes of the workshop is that the ideal size of traveller sites is around 5 pitches. JS also reported that Gypsies and Travellers was discussed at the last Lancashire Planning Officers Society (LPOS) meeting (7th December 2012) in response to the requirements set out in the 2012 guidance for traveller sites. LPOS decided that it was a matter for DPOG to lead on.'*

Further to this the Council is also aware that the Greater Manchester Planning Authorities are carrying out work collectively on assessing the need for traveller sites and further to this the Merseyside sub regional Authorities along with West Lancashire are working together on a future study.

South Ribble are committed to carrying out a study and intend to formally explore the procurement of a study with Central Lancashire partners as a preferred route, or alternatively with other Lancashire partners through DPOG. Formal arrangements for joint working within Central Lancashire continue through the Joint Advisory Committee, and through officer working groups. The next JAC meeting is to be held on 27th March, where Council Officers will be reporting on the examination process and discussions relating to a future Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Show People study will be raised.

Shown below is an indicative timetable of how the process of producing a study on Gypsy and Traveller and Traveling Show People could be addressed. The timescales reflect the need for the Council to have an up to date position on the needs within the Borough and any potential policy formulation before 2016.

Action	Indicative Time Scales
Housing Needs Study Finalised	July 2013
Respond to any relevant findings within the study	Summer/Autumn 2013
Start to prepare tender brief details for Gypsy and	Early 2014.

Traveller and Travelling Show People Study	
Tender process for Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Show People Study	Spring 2014
Commission Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Show People Study	Summer 2014 – Spring 2015.
Actions required in response to the Study	Spring/Summer 2015, onwards.