

Cabinet Meeting: Monday, 17 March 2025

Question from: Councillor Bellenger

Question to: Councillor Patient, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member with responsibility for Climate Action and Housing

QUESTION

This question relates to Item 9 on the Cabinet agenda - Gypsies and Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople Development Plan Document – Preferred Options Paper Consultation

Has the Cabinet fully considered the implications of allocating locations for the gypsy/traveller community sites where the land is in private, rather than public, ownership?

Would it not be easier for this Council and others to address any issues that could possibly arise, issues such as ASB or Environmental, if the sites were in the ownership of this Council or other public body?

If a gypsy/traveller community site is established on private land what, if any, support would be offered by the Council, or others to protect the landowner from the above issues if they were to occur.

Response

In preparing the Preferred Options consultation document, officers have carried out an extensive site assessment process which involved the consideration of a large number of sites in both public and private ownership which were then evaluated against the site assessment methodology (Appendix 4 of the supporting documents to the cabinet report).

Any form of residential development, for any community has the potential to be problematic if it is not designed and delivered in a way that meets the needs of that community. The strategy that the Council is using to prepare the DPD has been heavily predicated on building stronger relationships with the Gypsy and Traveller communities and understanding their needs and preferences. In large part this has been facilitated through our partnership with LeedsGATE (as explained in the Cabinet report).

Officers carried out a detailed search of Council land for potential sites. However, there were no available sites that could meet the needs of these communities. Through our engagement processes though, sites were brought forward by the community. As such we now have a range of potential sites that we consider are suitable to proceed to the formal consultation stage. We cannot of course pre-judge the outcome of that

consultation and we will listen carefully to the comments and any concerns that are raised.

Potential issues around antisocial behaviour are complex for all communities; however, the Council remains committed to ensuring that all of our residents feel happy and safe where they live.