

## Report of the Chair

### Special Scrutiny Programme Committee - 27 May 2014

#### GYPSY & TRAVELLER SITE SEARCH PROCESS – EVIDENCE SESSION

<b>Purpose</b>	The fifth evidence session will focus on further evidence from members of the public and other councillors who have contacted the committee.
<b>Content</b>	Arrangements have been made for the following persons to give evidence to this committee meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cllr Jennifer Raynor</li><li>• Hilary &amp; Tom Jenkins</li><li>• Phillip Robins</li><li>• Lawrence Bailey</li></ul>
<b>Councillors are being asked to</b>	Consider the information presented as part of the committee's review of the process, and ask questions.
<b>Lead Councillor(s)</b>	Councillor Robert Smith, Vice-Chair of Scrutiny Programme Committee.
<b>Lead Officer &amp; Report Author</b>	Brij Madahar, Scrutiny Coordinator Tel: 01792 637257 E-mail: <a href="mailto:brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk">brij.madahar@swansea.gov.uk</a>

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 A series of special meetings of the Scrutiny Programme Committee are taking place to review the process adopted to date in the search for a second gypsy and traveller site so that the committee can consider whether the process, leading up to the report to Council on 21 October 2013, was robust. The committee is looking at the quality of that process, and may identify any learning points about the process, and recommend any changes for the future as appropriate.
- 1.2 The committee is gathering evidence for this work. Initial meetings have enabled the committee to hear from officers involved in the process who have provided an overview of the process and legal framework and information on the criteria and method of site selection, the consultation process / outcomes, and the role of officers.
- 1.3 The committee was also keen to ensure that members of the public and other councillors not involved in the committee were provided with opportunity to engage with this work.

## **2. Call for Evidence**

- 2.1 The committee issued correspondence that would enable interested persons to:
- suggest questions about the process that was followed to help the committee ask the right questions at its meetings
  - submit information / views in writing about the process that was followed that they wish to bring to the committee's attention
  - if preferred, appear before the committee to give oral evidence about the process.
- 2.2 The committee raised awareness of this invitation through specific correspondence sent to all councillors, a press release which appeared on the council's website and local newspaper, and correspondence sent to members of the local gypsy and traveller community.
- 2.3 Those wishing to respond to this invitation were directed to contact the scrutiny team at the Civic Centre by email or print.

## **3. Response**

- 3.1 The following persons requested to appear before the committee to their evidence / views about the process:
- Tony Beddow
  - Keith Jones
  - Hilary and Tom Jenkins
  - Phillip Robins
  - Lawrence Bailey
  - Councillor Uta Clay
  - Councillor Jennifer Raynor
  - Councillor Penny Matthews
- 3.2 At the last meeting on 23 April evidence was received from:
- Tony Beddow
  - Keith Jones
  - Councillor Uta Clay
  - Councillor Penny Matthews
- 3.3 This meeting will enable the committee to hear from the remaining members of the public and other councillors who have contacted the committee:

a. Cllr Jennifer Raynor

Cllr Raynor was formerly vice-chair of the second Member Task & Finish Group for a short period. She intends to give views on the process and outline concerns about the role of the Group.

b. Hilary & Tom Jenkins

c. Phillip Robins

Mr. Robins is a resident of Fforestfach, living in the vicinity of the site of the former Greyhound Stadium - one of the 5 shortlisted sites. He was involved in the campaign against this site, and intends to share observations about the site selection process.

d. Lawrence Bailey

Mr. Bailey represented Llansamlet ward as a councillor during the period 1983-2007. He has first-hand knowledge of the area along with planning policies that impact upon the locality and relevant governance procedures in respect of the determination of land use. He owns a public affairs consultancy, Whiterock Consulting, which specialises in community engagement. He has seven years experience in this field. He works in association with planning consultancies, development companies, urban regeneration practices and property management groups. His firm has been involved in various support capacities with controversial projects and planning applications throughout the UK.

Mr. Bailey has forwarded his original response to the Council consultation (**Appendix 1**). Although the submission is site specific he intends to address matters of process and inconsistency in use of selection criteria, and clarify any points that the committee may wish to raise regarding the contents.

- 3.4 The purpose of the session is for the committee to listen to the evidence that is presented and ask questions in order to clarify anything that is said. It may also guide the future work of the committee. The committee will have the opportunity to reflect on all evidence gathered in due course in order to draw conclusions.

Date: 19 May 2014

Legal Officer: Nigel Havard / Debbie Smith  
Finance Officer: Carl Billingsley

**Background Papers:** None