

# **CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA**

## **MINUTES OF THE GYPSY AND TRAVELLER SITE TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

**HELD AT THE CIVIC CENTRE, SWANSEA ON THURSDAY 19 JULY 2012**  
**AT 12.00 NOON**

### **PRESENT:**

#### **Councillor(s):**

N S Bradley  
A C S Colburn

#### **Councillor(s):**

J W Jones  
E T Kirchner

#### **Councillor(s):**

J A Raynor  
G D Walker

### **Officers:**

R Owen, E Jones, A Kirczey, S Malough, M Saville, D Smith, D Turner, S Willingale and J Tinker

### 1. **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR**

**AGREED** that Councillor N S Bradley be appointed Chair for the ensuing Municipal Year.

(COUNCILLOR N S BRADLEY PRESIDED)

### 2. **APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR**

**AGREED** that Councillor J A Raynor be appointed Vice-Chair for the ensuing Municipal Year.

### 3. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor M Thomas.

### 4. **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

In accordance with the provisions of the Code of Conduct adopted by the City and County of Swansea, no interests were declared.

### 5. **MINUTES**

**AGREED** that the Minutes of the Gypsy and Traveller Site Task and Finish Group meeting held on 8 March 2012 and notes from the subsequent site visits held on 10 April 2012 be accepted as correct records.

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6. **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Terms of Reference of the Gypsy and Traveller Site Task and Finish Group were submitted for information.

**AGREED** that the Terms of Reference be noted.

7. **PROVISION OF NEW GYPSY AND TRAVELLER SITE -  
BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

The report submitted provided a general overview of progress in the assessment of filtered Gypsy and Traveller sites. An outline of the approach adopted and the outputs from the previous Task and Finish Group sessions were set out in Appendices 1 and 2 respectively. Appendix 3 listed the 19 sites initially filtered whereas Appendix 4 contained detailed site assessments of the final filtered 5 sites. A briefing note was circulated which outlined the legislative background and the history of the three extended Gypsy and Traveller families living in and around Swansea.

R Owen gave an overview regarding the need for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in the area which had been identified as part of the Housing Needs Assessment. It was stated that the official Ty Gwyn site was fully occupied and was not capable of being extended given to its positioning on a flood plain. It was also confirmed that temporary toilet and washing facilities had been provided for the unauthorised encampment on the Park and Ride site, as directed by the Children's Commissioner.

E Jones described the Gypsy and Traveller site selection sequence. It was stated that following on from the initial assessment of the suitability of all land under Council ownership, a total of 19 sites had remained in the process. All of these sites were assessed utilising a stringent filtering mechanism based on all relevant Welsh Government Guidance/Circulars.

They were then further refined to focus on 5 final sites for consideration. In order to move the assessment process forward the importance of the key considerations set out within Section 5 of the report were outlined. This centred on the need to:

- undertake a detailed layout/costings proposal;
- undertake economic viability profile;
- clarify the scope of providing permanent and transit site(s);

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- consult with the Gypsy and Traveller Community;
- consider whether Welsh Government New Sites Grant funding could become available;
- ensure that there is enough provision to cater for the immediate site provision deficiency and future Local Development Plan requirements;
- undertake a Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment on the selected site(s);
- undertake a Habitats Regulations Assessment if any site(s) are positioned within the Bury Estuary catchment area.

Questions were raised regarding the list of criteria against which the sites would be assessed and the actual size required. As this is a fluid situation it would be difficult to assess the exact number, but it was considered important that the site would have capacity for growth if necessary.

Concern was expressed regarding the objections in relation to these sites and that public consultation should be part of the process.

It was agreed that a public consultation exercise would take place prior to the submission of a planning application.

It was recognised that this filtering process had been undertaken in a transparent and rational way.

Further questions were asked regarding:

- information regarding the initially filtered 19 sites;
- who in the gypsy community should be consulted;
- if joint working with other Authorities was part of this process.

8. **NEXT STAGES**

It was agreed that the detailed assessment of the initially filtered 19 sites would be circulated to Group Members prior to the next meeting.

The Chair stated that he would be undertaking site visits to the five shortlisted sites and Members were urged to also attend these site visits.

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**AGREED** that:

- (1) Members undertake private site visits to the five shortlisted sites;
- (2) Officers informally seek the views from representatives of the Gypsy and Traveller community;
- (3) the next meeting be arranged in approximately one month to discuss these views and to examine the five final filtered sites.

The meeting ended at 1.00 p.m.

**CHAIR**