

Local Plan Phase 5: Matters, Issues and Questions

Hearing Statement Update

The following recommendations are set out in the Final Draft Executive report '*Delivering additional Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation and improving existing facilities*' and supersede those set out at 1.0.5 of our submitted Hearing Statement of the 28 February 2024:

Recommendation and Reasons

1. Executive is asked to:
 - I. Approve the approach to forward fund the delivery of additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches to meet the need identified in the Local Plan alongside improving existing provision. In doing so, formally acknowledging an investment estimated to be £5.25m will be needed and officers instructed to produce a detailed business case which will be brought before Executive for consideration later in the year.
 - II. In addition to approving the physical investments in pitches (recommendation I), note that a separate report will be brought to executive to refresh the Council's commitment to addressing the inequalities of all kinds that are faced by the gypsy and traveller community. This separate piece of work will set out a wide range of actions that are being developed with the gypsy and traveller community in order to address the issues highlighted in a recently completed Gypsy and Traveller Health Needs Assessment and those that have been identified by the gypsy and traveller community or through the discussions on the subject of this report.
 - III. Note that a recruitment process is underway for a Senior Project Officer Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation. This role will lead on the development of investment plans into both the development of existing pitches and the improvement of existing accommodation and facilities.

- IV. Note that a stock condition survey has been commissioned to be completed in spring and the outcome of which will inform investment plans alongside resident engagement.
- V. Note that, subject to further Executive approval post plan adoption, a Supplementary Planning Document will be developed setting out the design principles for pitch delivery to support the Local Plan policies that require additional pitches on both council sites and Strategic Housing Sites.
- VI. To establish a workstream to identify and assess alternative sites to support Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation using a benchmarking approach of the proposed Osbaldwick site expansion and the associated health and social outcomes using a suite of site selection criteria (to be agreed by Executive) against any alternative windfall sites across the identified developable area in the Local Plan that may emerge at a later date and reporting of that exercise to Executive prior to the commencement of the expansion of the Osbaldwick site.

Reason:

To ensure that the Council's commitment to meeting pitch requirements as set out in the Local Plan is appropriately met. The Local plan identifies that up to 1800 windfall sites for housing are likely to become available during the plan period. Therefore there may be alternative delivery options that may offer long-term advantages to meeting growing Gypsy and Traveller needs. Alternative sites have not been identified during the previous Local Plan site search for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation, but this does not mean they will not exist in the near future.