

 <b>Executive meeting 12 February 2014</b>		<b>Agenda Item No.</b>  <b>10</b>
<b>Title</b>	Gypsies & Travellers Preferred Options for Sites consultation	
<b>For further information about this report please contact</b>	Lorna Coldicott, (Senior Planner, Planning Policy)	
<b>Wards of the District directly affected</b>	All	
<b>Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?</b>	No	
<b>Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number</b>	4 June 2013	
<b>Background Papers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report of Public Consultation on the Gypsies and Travellers Options for Sites</li> <li>• Site Assessments paper</li> <li>• Gypsies and Travellers Preferred Options for Sites</li> </ul>	

<b>Contrary to the policy framework:</b>	No
<b>Contrary to the budgetary framework:</b>	No
<b>Key Decision?</b>	Yes
<b>Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)</b>	No
<b>Equality &amp; Sustainability Impact Assessment Undertaken</b>	Yes/No (If No state why below)

<b>Officer/Councillor Approval</b>		
<b>Officer Approval</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Name</b>
Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive		Chris Elliott/Bill Hunt
Head of Service		Tracy Darke
CMT		Chris Elliott, Bill Hunt, Andrew Jones
Section 151 Officer		Mike Snow
Monitoring Officer		Andy Jones
Finance		Mike Snow
Portfolio Holder(s)		Cllr Les Caborn
<b>Consultation &amp; Community Engagement</b>		
Consultation undertaken on the Options 14th June to 29th July 2013.		
<b>Final Decision?</b>		No
<b>Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)</b>		
Draft Development Plan Document (DPD)		

## 1. **SUMMARY**

### 1.1 This report seeks:

- To inform members of the results of the 'Options' consultation for the Gypsies and Travellers Site Options and the steps required to progress this work to the next stage of its preparation.
- Approval to carry out a consultation on a Preferred Options for Sites paper.

## 2. **RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 That the Executive notes the results of the public consultation on the 'Options' for Gypsy and Traveller Sites attached at **Appendix 1**
- 2.2 That the Executive agrees the Preferred Options as set out in **Appendix 2** and agrees that this forms the basis of a 6 week period of consultation commencing no later than 28<sup>th</sup> February
- 2.3 That the Executive commits in principle to invoke its use of Compulsory Purchase Powers to ensure delivery in the event that an insufficient number of sites set out in PO1 and PO2 come forward with the support of the landowners, to ensure that pitch required numbers are delivered

## 3. **REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION**

### 3.1 **Report of Public Consultation - Options**

In June 2013, a report was brought to the Executive requesting approval for officers to undertake public consultation on the 'Gypsy and Traveller Site Options', alongside that for the Revised Development Strategy of the Local Plan. The report was approved and the consultation was subsequently carried out between 14th June and 29th July.

- 3.2 The results of the consultation are summarised and attached to this report at **Appendix 1** to inform members and to highlight the main issues raised through the consultation, which includes a high proportion of respondents in opposition to site GT02 (and associated with that site, GT03 and GT04), due in part to a campaign carried out by the landowner. Many of these responses are however, generic and will be afforded weight accordingly. A total of around 3500 responses were received to this consultation alone.

- 3.3 The next step is to produce a Preferred Options document to reduce the number of sites and areas of search to those which are more likely to meet the criteria in the emerging Local Plan policy. This has required a considerable amount of work on site assessment, not only of the 20 sites and areas of search suggested in the Options consultation paper, but also of the 24 additional sites suggested during the consultation by respondents. Many of these have proven to be unsuitable, but have been subject to full assessment to assure consistency and fairness. The sites assessment paper can be seen at **Appendix 2**.

### 3.4 **Preferred Options Consultation Paper**

The preferred options consultation for Gypsy and Traveller sites is at a different stage to the Local Plan in that we are now suggesting a preference for certain sites and are seeking views on these to enable a final list of sites to be brought forward. This will be taken into account when producing a Development Plan

Document for 'Gypsy and Traveller Site Provision'. Once firm proposals have been drawn up for Gypsy and Traveller sites, a separate Site Allocation Development Plan will be prepared and will be the subject of a further round of consultation before submission to the Secretary of State for examination by a Planning Inspector.

- 3.5 Where landowners do not agree to make their land available for sale, the district council will use its powers of compulsory purchase to bring the site forward.

#### 4. **POLICY FRAMEWORK**

- 4.1 **Emerging Local Plan** - The site choices will need to conform to the Gypsy and Traveller Site Provision Criteria policy within the emerging Local Plan. It will also need to align with the plans of our partners' documents, including the Warwickshire Local Transport Plan.
- 4.2 **Fit for the Future** – The final version of the DPD will need to align with and help deliver the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) and the Council's Fit for the Future programme where appropriate. It will also need to align with the Local Plan and our partners documents, including the Warwickshire Local Transport Plan.

#### 5. **BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK**

- 5.1 Undertaking this work will have resource implications on the Council in terms of staff time as well as the costs of publicity, preparation and the printing of consultation material in respect of the Gypsy & Traveller Preferred Options for Sites. These costs will be accommodated within the part of the Planning Reserve set aside for the Local Plan.
- 5.2 If the Council has to invoke its powers of Compulsory Purchase in order to bring forward appropriate sites, there will be a cost implication associated with doing so, not only for the purchase of the land, but also for the legal procedure which can be lengthy if a land owner contests the order.

#### 6. **ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S) CONSIDERED**

- 6.1 An option would be to not allocate sites for Gypsies and Travellers, but this would be contrary to national policy and the Local Plan would be found unsound without a commitment to meeting the need demonstrated in the GTAA.
- 6.2 An option would be not to use powers of Compulsory Purchase to bring sites forward, but this would risk the Council not being able to meet its responsibilities in terms of pitch provision and failing to meet its duties under the terms of the Housing Act to provide residential accommodation for its communities. This could result in more unauthorised encampments in the district with the associated costly and lengthy legal and enforcement procedures

#### 7. **BACKGROUND**