

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

**CABINET REPORT
7th November 2017**

REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Jonathan Wilkinson
Portfolio Holder for Housing and Countryside Services

SUBJECT: Development of accommodation for Gypsies &
Travellers

REPORT FOR: Information

1. Summary

1.1 This report provides a summary of progress in respect of the development of addition accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers, as identified by the Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA), last report to Cabinet in January 2017.

2. Background

2.1 Section 101 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014, requires local housing authorities to undertake a GTAA every 5 years. Section 103 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 places a duty on the local authority to meet any needs identified in the GTAA in accordance with section 56 of the Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013. Section 104 provides the Welsh Ministers with a power to direct the local authority to meet those needs.

2.2 The GTAA was undertaken by ORS and submitted to Welsh Government by the 25th February 2016. Following discussions with Welsh Government it was approved by the Welsh Government. The approved assessment identifies:

- an immediate need, defined as in the first five years from when the assessment was sent to Welsh Government, for a five pitch site in Machynlleth; and,
- after 5 years the provision of two additional pitches in Welshpool to accommodate family growth at the Leighton Arches site.

2.3 The draft GTAA submitted to Welsh Government in February 2016 identified the following needs:

- the development of three un-serviced pitches on the Kings Meadow site in Brecon;
- the provision of a new five pitch site in Machynlleth and,
- the provision of two additional pitches on the Leighton Arches site in Welshpool.

- 2.4 The Council has been advised by Welsh Government that it is imperative that if an immediate need for a site has been identified then the Local Development Plan must include a site allocation and that it should be demonstrated that the site is suitable and deliverable, including funding / CPO (if necessary) being in place by the time of the examination of the LDP.

3. Progress on the development of accommodation

- 3.1 The extension of the Kings Meadow site in Brecon by the provision of 4 new pitches was completed during the spring 2017 and the new units are now occupied. The total scheme costs were £305,442 of which £291,815 was met by Welsh Government grant.
- 3.2 The extension to the Leighton Arches site is currently on-going, utilising land in the council's ownership but requiring a highways stopping up order. Planning consent has been secured and grant has been approved by Welsh Government. The tendering process is going to be split into two parts, one lot for the sub-structure and a further lot of the super structure. It is anticipated that work will commence on site in the coming months and should be completed by the end of March. The total estimated cost for the works are £465,000 and the Welsh Government have allocated a grant of £288,000 for the site extension.
- 3.3 The development of a new site of 5 pitches in Machynlleth has been more complex. The search for a suitable site took place during 2016, which due to the floodplain in Machynlleth meant that the number of suitable sites were severely restricted and the site that the family currently live on was determined to be the most appropriate. Planning consent has been obtained for the site and the council are currently in negotiation with the site owner for the purchase of the site. Once the purchase is agreed the council will seek to de-register the site (as it is common land) and exchange the site for another parcel of land. In addition a temporary site is currently being sought for the family, to accommodate the family when the proposed site is built out. It is anticipated that development activity on site will take place during 2019-20.

4. Preferred Choice and Reasons

- 4.1 Not applicable.

5. Sustainability and Environmental Issues/Equalities/Crime and Disorder,/Welsh Language/Other Policies etc

- 5.1 This work is being carried out in line with the GTAA.

6. Children and Young People's Impact Statement - Safeguarding and Wellbeing

- 6.1 There are no issues in respect of safeguarding children in regards to this proposal.

7. Local Member(s)

- 7.1 The local members for all the areas have been fully briefed on the matters relating to each area concerned.

8. Other Front Line Services

NA

9. Support Services (Legal, Finance, Corporate Property, HR, ICT, Business Services)

- 9.1 The Capital and Financial Planning Accountant confirms that the three projects outlined in Section 3 are included in the Capital Programme. However, the cost of the provision of a temporary site for Machynlleth is not a capital cost and has not been included in the capital budget. The service are currently trying to identify the location of the site and to estimate the costs.

The Finance Business Partner notes the content of the report. Until the temporary accommodation location is identified, then expenditure costs cannot be modelled. The service are aware that this is not a capital cost and will have to be funded from the current revenue financial envelope. Ongoing the new site revenue costs will have to be met from within existing budget or/and any additional income generated. Scheme deadlines have to be adhered to, as this will ensure Welsh Government funding allocation fully utilised, otherwise this will be a revenue budget pressure.

- 9.2 The Professional Lead-Legal notes the progress set out in this report and confirms that the Legal services will assist when and wherever required.
- 9.3 Property - Property note the update and will continue to support and advise the Housing Service with regards ongoing projects which may require further reports.

10. Public Service Board/Partnerships/Stakeholders etc

- 10.1 The transfer of the land is a specific Housing matter.

11. Corporate Communications

- 11.1 Communications Manager - The report is of public interest and requires use of proactive news release and appropriate social media to publicise the recommendation/decision.

12. Statutory Officers

- 12.1 The Strategic Director Resources (S151 Officer) notes the comments from Finance. It is essential that the revenue costs associated with the temporary site be managed within existing revenue budgets. Grant funding is reliant on the timescales of delivery, the monitoring of the projects is essential to ensure these funds can be secured.
- 12.2 The Solicitor to the Council (Monitoring Officer) has commented as follows: "I note the legal comment and have nothing to add to the report".

13. Members' Interests

The Monitoring Officer is not aware of any specific interests that may arise in relation to this report. If Members have an interest they should declare it at the start of the meeting and complete the relevant notification form.

Recommendation: N/A	Reason for Recommendation:
That Cabinet notes the content of the report	N/A

Relevant Policy (ies):	Co-operate Asset Policy		
Within Policy:	Y	Within Budget:	Y

Relevant Local Member(s):	
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Person(s) To Implement Decision:	MARK DAVIES
Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:	N/A

Contact Officer Name:	Tel:	Fax:	Email:
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