

To: Councillor Brock (Chair)
Councillors Page, Ennis, Barnett-Ward,
Duveen, Emberson, Hoskin, McElroy,
McEwan, Pearce, Robinson, Rowland,
Skeats, Stanford-Beale, Stevens, Terry and
White

Direct: ☎ 0118 9372303

22 October 2021

Your contact is: **Simon Hill - Committee Services (simon.hill@reading.gov.uk)**

NOTICE OF MEETING - POLICY COMMITTEE 1 NOVEMBER 2021

A meeting of the Policy Committee will be held on Monday, 1 November 2021 at 6.30 pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Reading, RG1 2LU. The Agenda for the meeting is set out below.

- | | | | |
|----|---|---------------------|----------------|
| 1. | CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS | | |
| 2. | DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST | | |
| 3. | MINUTES | | 5 - 18 |
| 4. | PETITIONS AND QUESTIONS | | |
| | To receive any petitions from the public and any questions from the public and Councillors. | | |
| 5. | DECISION BOOKS | | |
| 6. | GYPSY AND TRAVELLER TRANSIT SITE | BOROUGH WIDE | 19 - 40 |
| | This report provides an update on the progress towards delivering a site to meet the transit needs for Gypsies and Travellers within Reading and seeks approval to submit a planning application. | | |
| 7. | BRIGHTER FUTURES FOR CHILDREN LIMITED - RESERVED MATTERS | BOROUGH WIDE | 41 - 44 |

CIVIC OFFICES EMERGENCY EVACUATION: If an alarm sounds, leave by the nearest fire exit quickly and calmly and assemble on the corner of Bridge Street and Fobney Street. You will be advised when it is safe to re-enter the building.

This report is submitted to the Committee in its capacity as the sole member of Brighter Futures for Children Ltd (BFfC) to seek approval for the proposed appointment of a new Independent Non-Executive Director for BFfC.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION IN CLOSED SESSION

8. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The following motion will be moved by the Chair:

“That, pursuant to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) members of the press and public be excluded during consideration of the following items on the agenda, as it is likely that there would be disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant Paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) of that Act”

9. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FOR CLOSED SESSION ITEMS

10. ENERGY SUPPLY CONTRACTS

**BOROUGH
WIDE 45 - 52**

11. PROCUREMENT OF WATER SERVICES

**BOROUGH
WIDE 53 - 58**

WEBCASTING NOTICE

Please note that this meeting may be filmed for live and/or subsequent broadcast via the Council's website. At the start of the meeting the Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being filmed. You should be aware that the Council is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act. Data collected during a webcast will be retained in accordance with the Council's published policy.

Members of the public seated in the public gallery will not ordinarily be filmed by the automated camera system. However, please be aware that by moving forward of the pillar, or in the unlikely event of a technical malfunction or other unforeseen circumstances, your image may be captured. **Therefore, by entering the meeting room, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and/or training purposes.**

This page is intentionally left blank

Present: Councillor Brock (Chair);

Councillors Page (Vice-Chair), Ennis, Barnett-Ward, Duveen, Emberson, Hoskin, McElroy, McEwan, Pearce, Robinson, Rowland, Skeats, Stanford-Beale, Stevens, Terry and White

28. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

At the invitation of the Chair the Monitoring Officer made the following announcement:

‘In March 2020 following the first lockdown, and the government advice not to meet in person, the Council made interim arrangements for democratic oversight of the Council. This included arrangements under the Constitution for Policy Committee to assume greater responsibility for decisions, with a smaller quorum of councillors.

In addition, Policy Committee allowed greater flexibility in the existing Decision Book process, by removing the 10-day call-in period so as to allow more urgent decisions to be made through that mechanism if necessary. In granting this greater flexibility, the Policy Committee also delegated authority to me to bring the arrangement to an end “in accordance with government guidelines and restrictions on public gatherings”.

Since July 2021 the government has effectively removed all restrictions on meeting in public. In person meetings are taking place and the democratic oversight of council business is back to normal. There is greater resilience now given the Council’s adoption of hybrid meetings like this. So for all these reasons, I consider that there is no longer any justification for the call-in procedure to be disappplied. I am therefore exercising my delegation to restore the Decision Book process as set out in the Constitution.’

29. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2021 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

30. QUESTIONS

Questions on the following matters were submitted by members of the public:

	<u>Questioner</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Reply</u>
1.	J Wellum	The Council’s Response to the Challenges of Home Working	Cllr McEwan
2.	R Stainthorp	London Fringe Allowance	Cllr Pearce
3.	A Dally	Council Tax collection: Best Practice guidance	Cllr McEwan

Questions on the following matters were submitted by Councillors:

POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES - 23 SEPTEMBER 2021

	<u>Questioner</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Reply</u>
1.	Cllr White	Improving road safety on Crescent Road	Cllr Page
2.	Cllr White	Transit site for the travelling community in Reading	Cllr Page
3.	Cllr White	Reading Council supporting unaccompanied asylum-seeking children	Cllr Terry

(The full text of the questions and responses was made available on the Reading Borough Council website).

31. DECISION BOOKS

The Assistant Director of Legal & Democratic Services submitted a report listing the Decision Book reports that had been published since the report to the meeting of the Committee held on 12 July 2021.

The report also noted that a retrospective review had been requested of the Decision Book regarding the Provision of on-street and off-street Parking for the Royal Berkshire Hospital NHS Trust. Attached at Appendix 1 was the original Decision Book report and at Appendix 2 a summary of the review including the questions raised and the responses from officers.

Resolved -

- (1) That the Decision Book Reports be noted;
- (2) That the review of the Decision of the Executive Director of Economic Growth & Neighbourhood Services regarding the Provision of on-street and off-street Parking for the Royal Berkshire Hospital NHS Trust be noted.

32. CEMETERY AND CREMATORIUM RULES AND REGULATIONS

Further to Minute 6 of the meeting held on 14 June 2021, the Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report presenting the results of the Bereavement Services Public Consultation on the draft Cemetery and Crematorium Rules and Regulations. The following documents were attached to the report:

- Appendix 1 - Cemetery and Crematorium Rules and Regulations Sept 2021
- Appendix 2 - Consultation Summary Report
- Appendix 3 - Equality Impact Assessment Report

The report explained that the Rules and Regulations attached at Appendix 1 set out the proposed operations and service provision for the Cemetery and Crematorium. They had been the subject of public consultation and had been updated in light of the feedback and to ensure the Council could provide a service that met the needs of the communities of Reading, where it was reasonable and practical to do so. The changes made addressed

POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES - 23 SEPTEMBER 2021

both faith and non-faith needs. The report set out and explained the rationale for changes made following the consultation, which included changes to the following aspects of the service: Extended Opening Times, Out of Hours Service and Grave Types.

The report noted that the public consultation feedback included that inconsistent or lack of enforcement was unfair, caused issues for other users and was potentially discriminative. The approval of the revised Rules and Regulations would allow for stricter enforcement and enable the cemetery management to address some of the historic issues and attempt to mitigate the impact. On this basis, it was recommended that no further ad hoc changes be permitted and that any request that sat outside the Rules and Regulations must be either declined or submitted formally as a policy change and proceed through the formal decision-making processes. It was accepted that over time changes might need to be made and therefore the Rules & Regulations would be subject to a formal review every three years.

Resolved -

- (1) That the revised Cemetery & Crematorium Rules & Regulations as set out at Appendix 1 be approved;**
- (2) That the changes to the Service provision as summarised in the report be approved;**
- (3) That the Cemetery & Crematorium Rules and Regulations be reviewed every three years with the next review to take place in September 2024;**
- (4) That the Council's position, in respect of one-off requests which sat outside of the Rules and Regulations, be that no further ad hoc changes be permitted, and that if any request was received that sat outside the Rules and Regulations, it must be either declined or submitted formally as a Policy change and proceed through the formal decision-making processes;**
- (5) That the Assistant Director for Corporate Improvement and Customer Services be delegated authority to make non-material changes to the Rules & Regulations, to ensure the Service could act swiftly to implement any essential operating changes.**

33. BURIAL LAND OPTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

The Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report presenting options and considerations for potential land acquisition for burials. Attached to the report at Appendix 1 was a summary of Options for Burials within 20 miles of Reading.

The report noted that a new set of Cemetery and Crematorium Rules and Regulations had been drafted and consulted upon and were being considered by the Committee at this meeting (Minute 32 above refers). Adoption of the rules and regulations had implications for the types of burial services the Bereavement Service would offer, as well as the

POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES - 23 SEPTEMBER 2021

longevity of the burial land at Henley Road Cemetery. Taking into account the new regulations and updated burial numbers the projected lifespan for burials at Henley Cemetery was five years within Westfield, and three years within Mayfield.

The report set out two adjacent land options for expansion of Henley Road Cemetery at Henley Road allotments and Caversham Park and summarised issues relevant to potential land acquisition for burials. Alternative options for Reading residents outside the Borough were also considered and set out at Appendix 1. Seven options were presented to the Committee, four of which were recommended to proceed to a comprehensive options appraisal: land acquisition in Reading, land acquisition within 10 miles of Reading, shared land acquisition with a neighbouring Local Authority and extension of Burial Land at Henley Road Cemetery - Caversham Park Only.

Resolved -

- (1) That the currently available burial options outside of the Borough available to Residents and customers within a 20-mile radius be noted;**
- (2) That officers commission a comprehensive land options appraisal considering the following options for the provision of burial land: land acquisition in Reading, land acquisition within 10 miles of Reading, shared land acquisition with neighbouring Local Authority and Extension of Burial Land at Henley Road Cemetery - Caversham Park Only.**

34. AWARD OF CONTRACT - ACCOMMODATION WITH SUPPORT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE YMCA READING

The Executive Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report seeking approval to award a contract to YMCA Reading for the provision of accommodation with support to young people.

The report noted that the Council currently commissioned YMCA Reading to provide 40 units of accommodation to young people aged 16 - 25. This included specific vulnerable groups including unaccompanied asylum seekers (UASC), homeless 16/17-year olds, Children Looked After (CLA) and those leaving care. Four units were dedicated to supporting young mothers and their babies. The current contract expired on 30 September 2021.

The report explained that, as part of a new joint commissioning exercise, the Council and Brighter Futures for Children (BFfC) had undertaken a full needs analysis of the accommodation and support needs of those aged 16 - 25. This excluded those who required semi-independent living arrangements that were independently commissioned by BFfC. A review of the service provided by the incumbent provider, YMCA Reading had also been undertaken. Due to limited options for alternative accommodation provision the Council had undertaken without prejudice scoping and negotiations with YMCA Reading and subsequently a Contract Procedure Rules waiver had been approved to enter into a direct contract award with YMCA Reading. A three-year initial contract period was proposed, with an extension period of up to 24 months.

Resolved -

That a contract award to YMCA Reading for the provision of Accommodation with Support for Young People for a period of three years, with the option to extend up to a maximum of 24 months, in accordance with the approved CPR waiver, be approved.

35. ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION TO REMOVE PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS THAT WOULD RESULT IN RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

The Executive Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report seeking approval for a non-immediate Article 4 direction to remove certain permitted development rights that would result in new residential dwellings across the town centre, district and local centres, core employment areas and a number of other commercial areas. The following documents were attached to the report:

- Appendix 1: Equality Impact Assessment
- Appendix 2: Draft Article 4 direction
- Appendix 3: Evidence document

The report set out the background to permitted development rights (PDR) and Article 4 directions and explained that it was proposed to make a non-immediate Article 4 direction to withdraw the following PDR:

- Change of use of commercial, business and service use (use class E) to residential (Part 3, class MA);
- Change of use of hot food takeaway, betting office, payday loan shop or launderette to residential (Part 3, class M);
- Change of use of casino or amusement arcade to residential (Part 3, class N);
- Demolition of single, purpose built, detached block of flats or a single, detached office, light industrial or research and development building and its replacement with a detached block of flats or detached house (Part 20, class ZA);
- Up to two additional residential storeys on a detached commercial or mixed-use building (in use for retail, financial and professional, restaurant and café, office, research and development, light industrial, betting shop, payday loan shop, launderette) (Part 20, class AA); and
- Up to two additional residential storeys on a two or more-storey terraced commercial or mixed use building (see class AA for uses) or one additional storey on a one storey building (Part 20, class AB).

The proposed Article 4 Direction was attached to the report at Appendix 2 and would be applied to the entire town centre, district and local centres and core employment areas as defined in the Local Plan, as well as other primarily commercial or retail locations and areas with the poorest levels of air quality. The intention was not to halt all changes of use or development on commercial sites to residential use, but to give the Council more

control over relevant applications through the planning process. This would help protect the existing office and industrial supply and guard against the potential harm set out in this report. The Direction would allow the consideration of other planning matters such as affordable housing or amenity space provision to be considered with change of use applications, which would not otherwise be possible with the PDR in force. The justification for this approach is set out in full in the evidence document attached to the report at Appendix 3.

The report stated that notice of the direction would be served on relevant parties and by local advertisement and site notices. The relevant parties on whom to serve notice included every owner and occupier in the area, but it was considered that, with around 4,000 addresses within the area this was impracticable. The Council would therefore use other means to notify as many owners as possible, including through organisations representing businesses such as the Business Improvement District, Chamber of Commerce and Federation of Small Businesses. There would be an opportunity for parties to make representations on the direction within a 21-day period following serving the last notice. Representations would be reported back to the Committee which would then consider whether to confirm the direction. Subject to confirmation the direction would come into force on 31 October 2022, unless modified or cancelled by the Secretary of State.

Resolved -

- (1) That a non-immediate Article 4 Direction be made covering the area shown in Appendix 2 to remove the following permitted development rights within Schedule 2 of the General Permitted Development Order 2015 (as amended):**
 - Part 3 class MA;
 - Part 3 class M;
 - Part 3 class N;
 - Part 20 class ZA;
 - Part 20 class AA;
 - Part 20 class AB;
- (2) That the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services be authorised to make any minor amendments necessary to the direction that did not alter its main purpose, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport, prior to serving notice of the direction;**
- (3) That Committee agree that relevant groups and individuals be notified of the making of the Article 4 direction, including use of representative bodies of businesses rather than individual service on all landowners.**

36. FLEET REPLACEMENT PROGRAMME

The Executive Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report seeking scheme and spend approval for the Vehicle Replacement Programme (VRP)

as part of Capital Programme 2021-23. A Climate Impact Assessment was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report noted that the Council owned its fleet and that some vehicles were reaching or were past the end of their reasonable serviceable life and therefore in need of replacement. In order to meet the Council's ambitions to move towards net carbon zero by 2030, a planned approach to vehicle replacements needed to be taken which took into consideration the Government's 'Road to Zero' policy and supporting information, its capital allocation, local service needs, availability of the right fleet replacements and how vehicular fleet reductions could be made. The Council had worked with the Energy Savings Trust to consider the impact of its fleet and viable alternatives, and the findings were set out in the Climate Impact Assessment attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report stated that the VRP aimed to set out a forward plan of replacements with current market cost estimates. This approach would have financial planning benefits and would help with re-tendering of the maintenance contracts and show the journey towards greening the fleet. Multi-year contracting of vehicle acquisitions would also help to reduce administration and lead times of the procurement and generate fleet standardisation. Grouping of similar vehicles on contracts could result in savings in the procurement of vehicles, vehicle parts, repairer contracts and training of operators.

The report explained that it was proposed to access a national framework agreement to procure the vehicles, with outright purchasing considered to be the best option financially. The replacement programme would be separated into individual lots based upon the required vehicle specifications, and each lot individually procured via mini-competition through the most appropriate framework. Vehicles would not be replaced on a like-for-like basis and the programme would assess whether the service needs could be met in a different way, such as a reduction in vehicle size or electric bikes, cargo bikes or through an active transport plan. Some vehicle types that were due for replacement were not yet available as electric options; officers had investigated the options available and where possible delayed some vehicle replacements to enable the market to catch up. Electric powered vehicles were a key element for the Council meeting its carbon commitments but did need to be balanced with a vehicle's ability to undertake the required workload such as the use of auxiliary equipment powered by the vehicle.

Resolved -

- (1) That scheme and spend approval be given for the vehicle replacement programme, as set out in the report, to be funded from the agreed Fleet capital budget set out in the Capital Programme;**
- (2) That the Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport, and the Assistant Director of Legal & Democratic Services, be authorised to enter into vehicle contracts as required by the vehicle replacement programme, as well as, subject to funding being available within the Fleet capital budget, any additional**

vehicle purchase(s) required during the term of the replacement programme.

37. PROPOSED CHANGES: LOCAL COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME

The Director of Finance submitted a report setting out proposed amendments to the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme for the 2022/23 financial year to reduce administrative processes for both customers and staff and provide an increased level of support. An Equality Impact Assessment was attached to the report at Appendix 1 and a table of neighbouring local authority scheme characteristics was set out in Appendix 2.

The report summarised the following proposed changes to the scheme:

- To require persons of “Working Age” to make a minimum contribution of between 25% and 30% towards their Council Tax liability; the maximum reduction available to persons of “Working Age” would therefore be between 70% and 75% of their Council Tax liability which was an increase in support from the current 65% maximum;
- To remove the “Working Age” Council Tax Support minimum of £5 per month; removing minimum support levels would avoid claims ending thus reducing the number of re-applications and ensuring customers received the support they were entitled to no matter how small;
- To increase for Persons of Working Age the upper capital limit from £3,000 to £6,000 and remove the restriction to submit a new claim during the remainder of the billing year where capital was subsequently spent; this change would reduce administration as Department of Work and Pensions data currently available only provided capital data where it exceeded £6,000 in line with the Housing Benefit & Universal Credit Regulations;
- To allow Persons of Working Age a maximum of one month backdating provision within the scheme; this change would align with the current Housing Benefit & Universal Credit Regulations;
- To set a standard rate of £10 Non-Dependant Deduction to apply for non-dependants who were both engaged and not engaged in remunerative work; in addition to providing a greater level of support this change would reduce administration for both staff and customers.

For each of the proposed changes the report set out the financial impact on the Council and the number of customers that it was estimated would be affected.

The report noted that a statutory consultation period was required for changes to the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme. It was proposed to carry out an online consultation on the options for a period of eight weeks, to allow for consideration of feedback and revised modelling ahead of the Council’s Tax Base setting.

Resolved -

That the options to amend the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme for implementation from 1 April 2022 be noted and the proposals be agreed for public consultation, in accordance with the timetable set out in the report.

38. ACCESSIBLE INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

The Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report presenting for approval a draft Accessible Information and Communications Policy. The following documents were attached to the report:

- Appendix 1 - Accessible Information and Communications Policy
- Appendix 2 - Equality Impact Assessment
- Appendix 3 - Implementation Plan

The report explained that an Accessible Information and Communications Policy had been developed to provide a clear, consistent, and fair approach to the way that the Council communicated and provided information, particularly considering people who were disabled, who did not speak or read English at all or very well, who had low literacy or were in digital poverty or did not have access to IT.

The report noted that, as part of the development of the Policy, a Customer Needs Analysis and a best practice review had been undertaken which had established that there was a considerable legal framework of best practice in relation to accessible and inclusive information stemming from the Equality Act 2010 and further set out in the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) and the NHS Accessible Information Standard. A gap analysis of the Council's current practice had identified many areas of best practice already in place including the provision of a comprehensive Interpretation and Translation Service, the involvement of target groups, and the testing of the Council's website by people with a wide range of disabilities and accreditation of the website from the Shaw Trust. However the Council's website was only partially conformant with baseline Level AA tier of the WCAG 2.1, and general staff awareness of what was required and how to meet the Guidelines was low. Use of third-party websites and portals and distribution of third-party communications was common and these were not necessarily compliant with WCAG 2.1 Level AA.

The report explained that the Policy proposed to work towards compliance with WCAG and the NHS Accessible Information Standard across all services for customers with disability, impairment or sensory loss. Best practice would be promoted through improved staff awareness and training on accessibility. The other principles and standards proposed by the Policy included presenting positive images of disabled people and ethnic diversity on the website and publications, involving target audiences through needs analysis and co-production where appropriate to understand what communication methods were effective for them, and creating a designated web page for disabled people to make it easier to access information that was most important and relevant to them. A high-level implementation plan for the Policy was set out at Appendix 3 to the report.

Resolved -

That the draft Accessible Information and Communications Policy attached at Appendix 1 be approved.

39. 2021/22 QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE AND MONITORING REPORT

The Director of Finance submitted a report setting out the projected revenue and capital outturn positions for 2021/22 for both the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Accounts as at the end of June 2021 (Quarter 1), as well as performance against the measures of success published in the Council's Corporate Plan. The following documents were attached to the report:

- Appendix 1 - Financial Monitoring for Quarter 1
- Appendix 2 - Corporate Plan Measures for Quarter 1
- Appendix 3 - BFFC Covid Funding Request
- Appendix 4 - DACHS Covid Funding Requests

The report stated that the forecast General Fund revenue outturn position as at the end of Quarter 1 was an overspend of £3.419m after the use of £3.844m of corporate contingencies. This forecast position included estimated gross revenue pressures of £3.175m arising as a direct result of Covid-19. The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) was projecting an underspend of £0.333m as at the end of Quarter 1, the General Fund Capital Programme was forecast to underspend by £11.306m in 2021/22, and the HRA Capital Programme was forecast to underspend by £8.456m in 2021/22. £4.297m of 2021/22 savings were currently categorised as non-deliverable (red) with a further £3.543m categorised as at risk of delivery (amber).

The report noted that at its meeting on 12 July 2021 (Minute 23 refers) the Committee had approved that £3.968m of un-ringfenced Covid-19 grant funding be put into an earmarked reserve to meet the ongoing financial impacts of the pandemic. Bids from demand-led services in the Directorate of Adult Care and Health Services (DACHS) and Brighter Futures for Children (BFfC) had now been received, amounting to £1.986m, and the Committee was requested to consider their approval. Appendix 3 set out bids from BFfC for four proposals relating to Supporting 0-2s and Parents, Schools Recovery Resources, Adolescent Mental Health, and Children Looked After: Mental Health & Wellbeing. Appendix 4 set out bids from DACHS for five proposals relating to Reduce people waiting for Mental Capacity Assessments to move from Appointee to Court Appointed Deputy, Physiotherapist for community rehabilitation post rapid hospital discharge, Relaunch & expand NHS Health Checks Programme, Continuing Health Care Resource and Commissioning Quality Assurance.

The report also explained that there was a budget virement that required approval from the Committee as it exceeded £0.5m. The purpose of the virement was to align the electricity charges for streetlighting with other Corporate Energy Budgets, in order to make it clearer to review the Corporate Energy expenditure for forecasting/efficiency

POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES - 23 SEPTEMBER 2021

monitoring purposes and keep the Energy Budget separate from the Maintenance expenditure.

At the meeting the Chief Executive gave an update on the potential impact on the Council's budget from the wider economic context including the anticipated increase in inflation and pressures in the labour market such as a shortage of drivers. He also summarised the ongoing and possible future impact of COVID such as increased demand for social care and mental health services and the effect of home working on the local economy and therefore business rates collection.

Resolved -

- (1) That it be noted that:**
 - a) The forecast General Fund revenue outturn position as at the end of June 2021 was a net overspend of £3.419m after the use of £3.844m of contingencies;**
 - b) The Housing Revenue Account was forecast to underspend by £0.333m as at the end of June 2021;**
 - c) The General Fund Capital Programme was forecast to underspend by £11.306m;**
 - d) The HRA Capital Programme was forecast to underspend by £8.456m;**
 - e) £4.297m of 2021/22 savings were currently categorised as non-deliverable (red) with a further £3.543m categorised as at risk of delivery (amber);**
 - f) The performance achieved against the Corporate Plan success measures was as set out in Appendix 2 of the report;**
- (2) That the budget virement relating to electricity charges be approved;**
- (3) That the bids for Covid-19 funding set out in Appendices 3 and 4 attached to the report be approved.**

40. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved -

That pursuant to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), members of the press and public be excluded during consideration of item 41 below as it was likely that there would be a disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs specified in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to that Act.

41. CIVIL ENFORCEMENT (PARKING) CONTRACT AND PARKING (MOTOR VEHICLE) STRATEGY - UPDATE

Further to Minute 87 of the meeting held on 18 January 2020 the Executive Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report providing an update on the Parking Strategy and Civil Enforcement service. The following documents were attached to the report:

- Appendix 1 - Current service
- Appendix 2 - Proposed Service
- Appendix 3 - The Parking Strategy
- Appendix 4 - The Procurement Strategy
- Appendix 5 - Procurement timeline

The report noted that work had included a review of the performance of the existing service, including both insourced and outsourced elements, and the finalisation of a new draft Parking Strategy to align with the objectives of the draft Reading Transport Strategy 2036. Approval was sought to adopt a new Civil Enforcement (Parking) procurement strategy, in-source some currently outsourced services and agree to procure a new civil enforcement service provision required to support the service, continue to review longer term partnership options for the future service, carry out a trial of paperless permits to replace the current visitor and resident permit parking scheme, apply for a designated order for Moving Traffic Enforcement, and a revised delegation to make future changes to commercial parking arrangements.

Resolved -

That the Committee note progress made on the development of a draft Parking Strategy and a new Civil Enforcement (Vehicle Parking) Service Contract and that the following be approved:

- i) The Procurement Strategy (Appendix 4) setting out how the Council would procure a new Civil Enforcement contract alongside a timeline illustrated in Appendix 5;**
- ii) The recommendations set out in Paragraph 6.6 of the report to in-source and let out various services relating to civil enforcement;**
- iii) The option for further in-house or jointly delivered services to be considered during the next contract period 2022-2027 and investigated with a future report being presented to an appropriate Committee in 18 months following the delivery of the new contract;**
- iv) The trial of a paperless visitor and resident parking permit scheme, subject to the availability of suitable IT and that the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to undertake the necessary legislative and regulatory processes to remove the requirement to**

POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES - 23 SEPTEMBER 2021

display a permit within the Traffic Regulation Orders (all comments and objections would be reported to Traffic Management Sub-committee);

- v) The application for a Designation Order for Civil Enforcement of Moving Traffic Contraventions' under Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004;
- vi) That the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services be delegated authority, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport and relevant Ward Councillors for the area affected to make future changes to commercial parking arrangements, both off-street and on-street, in line with the relevant adopted Parking Strategy and the MTFS.

(The meeting started at 6.30 pm and closed at 9.00 pm)

This page is intentionally left blank

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	POLICY COMMITTEE		
DATE:	1 NOVEMBER 2021		
TITLE:	GYPSY AND TRAVELLER TRANSIT SITE		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	CLLR TONY PAGE CLLR ADELE BARNETT- WARD	PORTFOLIO:	STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT/ NEIGHBOURHOODS AND COMMUNITIES
SERVICE:	HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
LEAD OFFICER:	DARYN INSTON	TEL:	
JOB TITLE:	PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT MANAGER	E-MAIL:	Daryn.inston@reading.gov. uk

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report provides an update on the progress towards delivering a site to meet the transit needs for Gypsies and Travellers within Reading and to seek approval to submit a planning application.

1.1.1 Appendix 1 - Gypsy and Traveller Site Appraisal

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 That Policy Committee note the current position on progressing the Gypsy and Traveller site, including matters relating to the Environment Agency and Atomic Weapons Establishment.

2.2 That Policy Committee approves the submission of a planning application whilst noting the above risks.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 Periodically assessing the housing needs of people living in caravans or houseboats is a requirement for local housing authorities under the Housing and Planning Act 2016 (124). At the same time, examining the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and seeking to accommodate those needs is an expectation of national planning policy in preparing Local Plans

4. CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1 Following a review of sites in 2019/20 the Council instructed Hampshire County Council (HCC) to undertake a site appraisal on two potential sites to accommodate the needs of Gypsies and Travellers within the borough. HCC provided an in-depth appraisal of the two potential sites which concluded that only one site at Smallmead was possibly suitable and then only as a transit site option. The appraisal indicates that the site can accommodate 7 pitches or up to 14 caravans and cars. The report on the options appraisal is included at Appendix 1. There are 3 main issues with the site: one, its location next to the recycling centre and water treatment works with odour and public health issues, two, it sits within a flood zone and three, its location on the edge of the Detailed Emergency Planning Zone for the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) Burghfield.
- 4.2 HCC were instructed to carry out a detailed feasibility of the Smallmead site with the intention of enabling a planning application to be submitted.
- 4.3 Due to the pandemic and resourcing issues HCC have been significantly delayed in progressing this work. As the Smallmead site sits within a flood zone the work required to alleviate the issues has been complex. Further complications have arisen due to protracted discussions with the Environment Agency (EA). This is due to their view that the Gypsy and Traveller community are considered as a 'highly vulnerable' group when assessing flood risk. This effectively means that no technical solution to flood risk mitigation can overcome this in-principle objection.
- 4.5 National planning policy however in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that sites used for holiday or short-let caravans and camping are 'more vulnerable' uses, subject to a specific warning and evacuation plan, as opposed to the 'highly-vulnerable' uses which include caravans, mobile homes and park homes intended for permanent residential use.
- 4.6 Officers consider that a transit use would fall into the 'more vulnerable' classification, which means that the sequential and exception tests are required but does not necessarily mean that development is automatically inappropriate. The sequential test demonstrates that a sequential approach has been taken to development, with sites at lowest risk of flooding considered first. If the sequential test is passed, the exception test is whether it fulfils both of the following criteria:
 - (a) the development would provide wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh the flood risk; and
 - (b) the development will be safe for its lifetime taking account of the vulnerability of its users, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, will reduce flood risk overall.
- 4.7 HCC's flood consultant Ramboll's are currently in dialogue with the EA regarding this matter. The EA are currently indicating that if the Council were to seek planning approval for this site, they would raise an objection in principle, the Planning Applications Committee would then have to consider whether to override this objection.
- 4.8 In addition to the EA's concern, the site is also located on the edge of the Detailed Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ) for AWE Burghfield. Although it sits outside of the 3.5km radius on which the DEPZ was based it is still located within the defined DEPZ albeit on the edge. This is due to the methodology applied to

the creation of the zones which tried to avoid the splitting of communities. Officers have discussed the use of this site with Emergency Planners (EP's). However, the EP's are still developing policy in liaison with West Berkshire Council for sites that are beyond the 3.5km radius but technically within the DEPZ. Therefore, a decision on whether this site can accommodate this use will need to be tested during the planning application.

5.0 OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 A Gypsy and Traveller, Travelling Showpeople and Houseboat Dweller Accommodation Assessment was carried out in 2017 to assess the needs for those living in caravans and houseboats. In summary, it identified needs of 10-17 permanent pitches and 10 transit pitches for Gypsies and Travellers up to 2036. There is currently no provision for this community within the borough. Officers have considered a number of sites for provision and none have been found to be suitable.

6.0 OPTIONS PROPOSED

6.1 Despite the significant issues with the land at Smallmead officers propose that a planning application is submitted. This is currently the only option available to deal with the needs of Gypsies and Travellers within Reading.

6.2 In addition the Council continues to deal with continual unauthorised encampments in the borough, the majority of which are on Council land. This has significant financial costs in terms of legal, bailiff, clean-up costs and officer time as well as a detrimental effect on communities when the encampments take place within public spaces.

5.3 Powers under the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 to seize vehicles of those who have failed to comply with a direction to leave land rely upon a suitable pitch being available on a caravan site within a local authority area, which means that the ability to use these powers in Reading is currently restricted by the lack of sites.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

5.1 The provision of a Gypsies and Traveller site will lead to:

- A Healthy Environment - by reducing the issues with unauthorised encampments in the town
- Thriving Communities - by tackling the inequality that Gypsy and Travelling community face by the lack of a site and ensure that they have an equal chance to thrive. This community is one of the most marginalised groups in the borough.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Should a Planning Application be successful then the works to a deliver a site will be delivered to highly sustainable standards in line with the Council's climate change ambitions to be a net zero carbon town by 2030.

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 7.1 A planning application would be subject to a statutory planning consultation. In addition to this statutory consultation officers have previously engaged the community regarding the selection of sites when an alternative site at Cow Lane was consulted upon, and the results of this were reported to Policy Committee in June 2018 (Consultation on Gypsy and Traveller Provision).

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 Detail on Equality Impact Assessment was considered as part of the policy report in June 2018. The assessment recognised that an adverse impact on racial groups would result of any decision not to provide for transit needs. However, it also considered that there would be a justifiable reason for this position, specifically due to the limited suitable and available sites in Reading to meet these needs.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Should a planning application be submitted and be successful the cost of building out the site is estimated at 2.54 million. It is anticipated that the site would be built out within the Housing Revenue Account. Officers have confirmed with Homes England that funding is available for Gypsy and Traveller sites however this usually applies to permanent sites only. Officers would need to submit a bid following planning approval to enable Homes England to consider.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 is the main legal context for enforcement powers relating to unauthorised gypsy and traveller encampments. Section 61 is the direction to leave the land and S62 is the power to seize vehicles if the direction is not complied with.
- 10.2 Should trespassers refuse to adhere to a request to leave the land when asked to do so by the landowner or anyone acting on behalf of the landowner then sections 61- 62 of Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 gives the police discretionary powers to direct trespassers to leave and remove any property or vehicles they have with them. The power applies where the senior police officer reasonably believes that two or more people are trespassing on land with the purpose of residing there, that the occupier has taken reasonable steps to ask them to leave and any of the following conditions have been met:
- a) that any of the trespassers have caused damage to land or property;
 - b) that any of the trespassers have used threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour towards the occupier, a member of the occupier's family or an employee or agent of the occupier; or
 - c) that the trespassers have between them six or more vehicles on the land.
- 10.3 In making their decision the Police must also consider whether there are other activities on the encampment such as serious breaches of the peace, disorder criminal or anti- social behaviour that would necessitate police involvement as well as the wider impact on the settled community

10.4 In addition the Police have powers (as above these are discretionary) under sections 62 A-E of Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 to direct both trespassers and travellers to leave land and remove any vehicle and property from the land where the senior police officer reasonably believes that two or more people are trespassing on land with the purpose of residing there, that the occupier has taken reasonable steps to ask them to leave and there is a suitable pitch available on a caravan site elsewhere in the local authority area. The site must have a relevant site manager (Local authority, Social Landlord or Private registered provider of social housing). Provision of a transit site in the borough would make it much easier for the Police to move on unauthorised encampments.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 Consultation on Gypsy and Traveller Provision June 2018

This page is intentionally left blank

DRAFT
E03883
Reading Borough Council



<i>Revision</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Revised By</i>	<i>Checked By</i>
1	issue	29 November 2019	PP	RB

In June 2019 Hampshire County Council Hampshire County Council (HCC) Property Services prepared a report 'Gypsy Traveller Provision and Incursion Management Options for Reading Borough Council' which stated:

- Reading Borough Council has identified through the recently compiled Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) a requirement to ensure adequate permanent and transit Gypsy and Traveller pitch provision within the Borough, for which there are currently no pitches.
- In addition, there are very visible problems associated with unauthorised encampments within the Borough, particularly evidenced in persistent repeat incursions by a limited number of local families. These have a high public and political profile. An element of the requirements identified in the GTAA align with the management of these unauthorised encampments.
- The options available for the Borough Council are limited in the short term, with an injunction being the most cost-effective method to manage the disruptive behaviours associated with unauthorised encampments, that are causing anxiety to residents and reputational and financial cost to the Borough.
- The report supported the assessment of how permanent and/or transit pitches might be delivered in the Borough, the constraints and blockers to such delivery and likely construction and continuing management implications
- The 2017 GTAA has recommended that 10–17 permanent pitches and transit pitches should be provided in the Borough.

The report set out how permanent and transit provision satisfy different needs and consequently have different space and design criteria:

Permanent

- Permanent pitches provide long term residency enabling suitable and consistent education, health and social support to the local travelling community, whilst also enabling the travelling tradition to continue alongside these priorities. The provision of permanent pitches requires suitable land which can be made available in the context of financial, legal and political constraints. Permanent site layout is more generous

to reflect the longer-term nature of residency and consequently the land take is greater and site facilities more extensive.

Transit

- Transit site provision, by nature has to be of simple and resilient design, allowing for limited facilities reflecting the impact of high turnover and potential disinterest in the integrity of the site infrastructure. Where transit sites have been constructed the success and longevity of infrastructure has been found to be varied.

Training

The need for relevant training in site management is paramount from the outset of the agreed project:

- HCC is able to offer initial and ongoing training to facilitate education in the history, traditions and culture of the Gypsy and Traveller community in general as well as the basic and necessary skills required for transit / permanent site management.
- Site management is an acquired skill and whilst effective guidance can be given initially, the required skills are developed over a period of time dealing with the community concerned.
- The offer of on site, side by side guidance would be of value for an agreed time period together with an ongoing 'help desk' facility during the setting up and initial period of site occupation.
- A full-time dedicated site manager will be required with additional resourcing to cover sickness, leave and absence. This is not a resource that can be provided easily by an external agency and it will be unusual and unlikely to find someone with the relevant skills and knowledge to step in at short notice. To that end it will be necessary to have 'cover' staff trained accordingly.

Two sites have been identified by the report within Reading Borough Council's estate for further study which might provide the accommodation identified in the GTAA:

- To develop any of option will require capital investment from the Borough Council. Grant funding may be available from central government, but this is uncertain, although 50% grant was achieved in 2015.
- Operational management of the developments requires revenue and staff resource, which for permanent accommodation can be mitigated in partnership with private site operators, but for transit facilities such commitment would be the Borough Council's.

- Development of transit facilities would not only satisfy the demands of the GTAA, but also manage the problems associated with unauthorised encampments in the Borough. For clarity, permanent site facilities only address the demands of the GTAA but do not support management of unauthorised encampments.

In September 2019 HCC Property Services were asked to prepare viability studies for the following sites as potential Gypsy & Traveller Transit sites:

- Smallmead, off Island Road
- Land adjacent to Riverside Park

This report includes desktop site information as well as viability level information on services to allow appropriate viability costs to be estimated.

Reference has been made to design guidance published by the Department for Communities and Local Government: 'Designing Gypsy & Traveller Sites' (May 2008. Pertinent extracts have been included within Annex 2)

Barry Jordan-Davis, HCC Senior Gypsy Liaison Officer provided the following additional commentary on such a facility to help establish design parameters:

- Transit Site pitches are subject to a licence for site residents for a pre-determined length of stay.
- Height barrier system for caravan entry / exit
- Hard standing / space for a touring caravan or maybe 2 allowing for extended family/children
- Not necessary for pitch demarcation fences but pitch boundary to be evident
- Hard standing for vehicles x 2 per pitch
- Residence to be subject of a site licence stipulating length of stay (weeks / 1 - 3 months)
- Licence to stipulate / be specific to identify the pitch, number of residents / caravans and vehicles per pitch
- Basic facilities / outhouse – water (Prepay / metered) – light – heating (pull cord electric / fan) – toilet – basin, mirror, bath / shower – single skin, concrete block construction to facilitate
- Lockable internal room at back of outhouse which also gives maintenance access to the water and bathroom plumbing and electrics / consumer unit
- Electricity by way of prepayment / card – waterproof cabinet inset into back of building for use by residents with management access

- All internal fittings to be stainless steel and smooth finish with least possibility of removal / damage.
- Consideration to be given to roofing materials
- Different ethnic groups (Romany Gypsies / Irish Travellers / New Travellers) occupying the site can result in conflict and increased management input. In the past such conflict has resulted in site closures
- Consideration of some basic pitches with no electric hook (used by those who wish to run generators) will need stand pipe for water and sluice for toilet facilities
- Facilities for waste disposal to prevent fly tipping
- Licence to stipulate no business on site including exclusion of bringing commercial waste on to site
- Consideration to be given to CCTV coverage
- On site office facility for strong management presence during office hours with out of hours cover for emergencies
- Establish liaison with local Police for access and availability of pitches: Sec 62 CJPOAct 1994 (Power to direct Travellers to a site)
- The existing Gypsy & Traveller Transit facility at Westhampnett, West Sussex referenced within this report offers a sensible starting point for plot sizes*
- Costings: Site management and access cover / CCTV / Damage / General site fabric maintenance / Fly Tipping / Clear Up's (abandoned caravans and vehicles etc)

* Refer Annex 1 for information relating to the existing Gypsy & Traveller Transit facility at Westhampnett, West Sussex referenced within this report



Gypsy & Traveller Transit Facility, Westhampnett, West Sussex

Smallmead Site



- 01 Aerial plan
- 02 Aerial oblique view fom north
- 03 Island Road - future site access road location
- 04 Island Road - future site access road location
- 05 Island Road - future site access road location
- 06 Aerial oblique view fom south
- 07 Aerial oblique view fom east
- 08 Aerial oblique view fom west



Borough boundary plan indicating approximate site location



Existing Buildings

- There are no buildings currently on the site.

Planning Issues

- No discussions have been held with the local planning authority to date.

Ecology

Due to the high level nature of the exercise, no ecology desktop surveys have been undertaken. However from site visits the following is noted:

- Site is adjacent a watercourse with surrounding scrubland habitat
- Given comparatively hostile surrounding industrial land use may mean site is locally significant for wildlife

Archaeology

Berkshire Archaeology were consulted and from a review of Historic Environment Record (HER) and other sources of information the following comments were raised:

- This site is of modest area (c. 0.2ha) and lies between Reading Sewage Treatment Works and Island Road Recycling Centre.
- There are no known archaeological monuments or finds spots within the red line boundary
- It is not clear if the site falls within the area of the former gravel workings or the sewage works. However it seems likely that the site has been previously disturbed, not least from creation of the adjacent drainage channel
- On this basis and given the modest site area, it is unlikely that any archaeological response would be sought in relation to any future proposal for this site.

Ground Conditions

Jonathan Prew, Head of Structure and Landscape at HCC PS has commented as follows:

- No identified previous development on land
- Plenty of historical boreholes available on British Geological Survey database.
- Ground likely to be c.0.3m topsoil, over 0.99m soft clay, over 2.4m gravel over clay.

Drainage

- Water table unknown. If table is in the gravel then soakaways unlikely to be viable
- Further research would be required to establish whether drainage to the adjacent open ditch is possible

Flood Risk

- The site lies partly within Flood Zone 3 (with remainder in Flood Zone 2) as illustrated here and is therefore in an area with a high probability of flooding.
- A Flood Risk Assessment would be required to accompany any planning application.



Flood Risk

Structure & Foundations

- Strip foundations in the gravel possible
- Soil Investigation recommended, say 5 window samples.

Mains Services / Utilities

- New Water, Electric, Data and drainage will be brought in from the nearest public highway in Island Road, due to the electrical load a transformer will be required for the site (location tbc)
- Fiscal Meter will be located at the site Boundary for ease of access for utility companies.
- Additional ducts will be laid from the highway for future use.

Mechanical Highlight Report:

- The mechanical services, will comprise of ventilation fans for toilets, utility room and the Kitchenette's together with hot and cold water services to each amenity building and the office
- Hot water for each building will be provided via mains fed electric hot water heaters
- A fire main shall be provided with a hydrant at the site Boundary

Electrical Highlight Report

- Electrical Services will comprise , small power and lighting to each amenity building
- Each amenity building will be all electric.
- Each Amenity Building will be separately metered and will also be able to be individually isolated from main services
- All services will generally be robust and exposed for easy access, repair and maintenance.

Highways

- Access would be directly off the existing Island Road
- No discussions have been held with the local highways authority to date.

Smallmead Option



Features

- 7no transit pitches (3no double units and 1 no single, numbers shown)
- A 3m offset is provided as a fire break to the vegetated eastern perimeter
- Office located at northern perimeter, adjacent entrance
- Bin / waste store (size tbc)
- Internal access road arrangement creates 'turning head' for refuse lorry operations
- Pitch sizes and accommodation based on Westhampnett Transit facility (refer Annex 1)
- Pole mounted CCTV provision at each end of site to cover whole site

Benefits

- Site is in Reading Borough Council ownership
- Site remote from residential and other sensitive areas
- Office location allows passive surveillance of entrance
- Majority of pitches on eastern side of site, reducing exposure to flood risk
- CCTV significantly enhances ease of management and mitigates site damage and fly tipping
- Most services available nearby

Challenges

- Significant part of site within EA Flood Risk 3 (worst case) designation from adjacent watercourse
- Location between recycling centre and sewage treatment works may lead to potential odour and public health issues
- Both the above items contrary to design guidance published by the Department for Communities and Local Government: 'Designing Gypsy & Traveller Sites'
- High traffic volume on Island Road
- Achieving required sightlines onto Island Road from entrance
- Adjoining land and footpath at risk from fly tipping, grazing etc but CCTV should mitigate

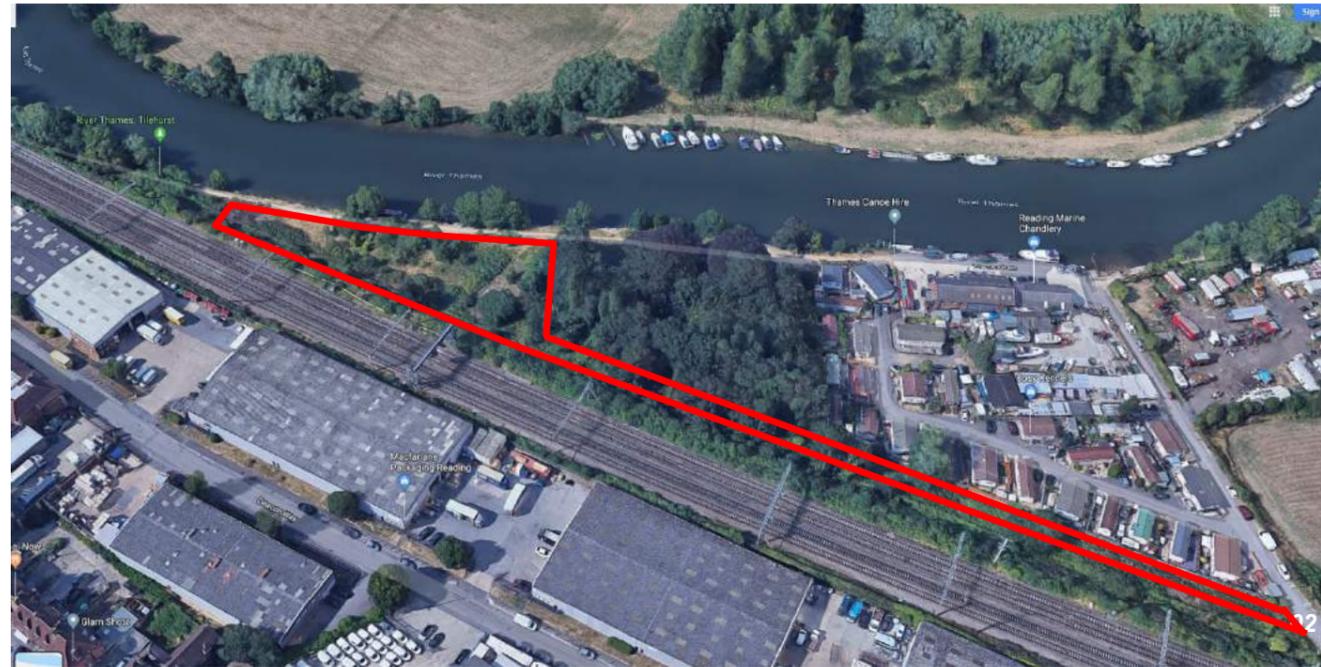
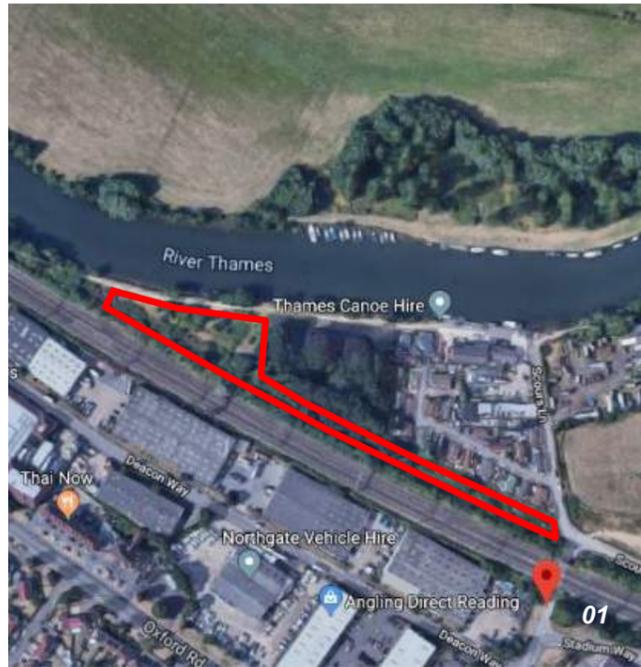


 site extent

Option Plan (1:500 at A3)

Riverside Park Site

Page 31



- 01 Aerial plan
- 02 Aerial oblique view fom south
- 03 Scours Lane - future site access road location
- 04 Scours Lane
- 05 Looking east along River Thames towpath
- 06 Looking west along River Thames towpath
- 07 Aerial oblique view fom north
- 08 Aerial oblique view fom east



Borough boundary plan indicating approximate site location



Existing Buildings

- There are no buildings currently on the site.

Planning Issues

- No discussions have been held with the local planning authority to date.

Ecology

Due to the high level nature of the exercise, no ecology desktop surveys have been undertaken. However from site visits the following is noted:

- Site location on banks of River Thames means it is likely to be rich in wildlife
- The land to the east of the site is richly wooded with a number of mature and very mature deciduous trees and therefore likely to be rich in wildlife

Archaeology

Berkshire Archaeology were consulted and from a review of Historic Environment Record (HER) and other sources of information the following comments were raised:

- The area within the red line boundary of this site is of reasonable size (c. 0.5ha)
- The site lies on the south bank of the River Thames within the Middle Thames Valley an archaeologically rich area
- The HER records no known archaeological monuments or finds spots within the red line boundary
- An indication of the archaeological potential of the area is provided by the number and quality of items dredged from the River Thames close to the sit
- On this basis, the site has an archaeological potential and there is likely to be a requirement for a form of archaeological response, probably via exploratory work.

Ground Conditions

Jonathan Prew, Head of Structure and Landscape at HCC PS has commented as follows:

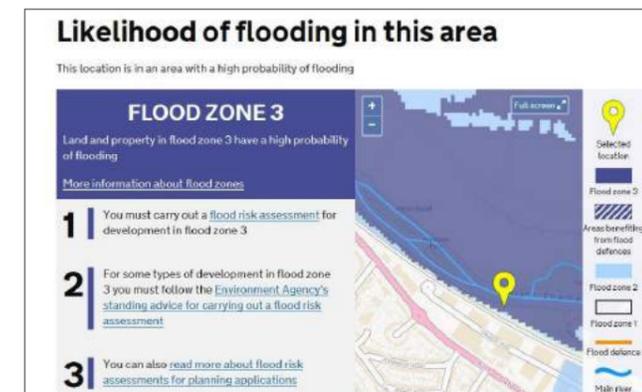
- Some previous developments on site, including a bathing place. Would need SI, say three boreholes and 4 window samples
- Some nearby borehole data is recorded on British Geological Survey database
- Ground could be c.2.4m made ground over 0.6m peat over 6m drift over chalk

Drainage

- Site located next to River Thames and water table could be high.
- Soakaways are therefore unlikely to be effective.

Flood Risk

- Unsurprisingly, given the location alongside the River Thames, the site lies wholly within Flood Zone 3 as illustrated here and is therefore in an area with a high probability of flooding.
- A Flood Risk Assessment would be required to accompany any planning application.



Flood Risk

Structure & Foundations

- Early consideration should be given to the probable requirements for piles at the site given the likely ground conditions

Mains Services / Utilities

- New Water, Electric, Data and drainage will be brought in from the nearest public highway (a significant distance). Due to the electrical load a transformer will be required
- Fiscal Meter will be located at the site Boundary for ease of access for utility companies.
- Additional ducts will be laid from the highway for future use

Mechanical Highlight Report:

- The mechanical services, will comprise of ventilation fans for toilets, utility room and the Kitchenette's together with hot and cold water services to each amenity building and the office.
- Hot Water for each building will be provided via electric hot water heaters
- A fire main shall be provided with a hydrant at the site Boundary

Electrical Highlight Report

- Electrical Services will comprise small power and lighting to each amenity building
- Each amenity building will be all electric.
- Each Amenity Building will be separately metered and will also be able to be individually isolated from main services
- Services will generally be robust
- All services will generally be robust and exposed for easy access, repair and maintenance.

Highways

- Given the remote nature of the site a significant access road from Scours Lane to the east of the site will be required, parallel to the railway line
- No discussions have been held with the local highways authority to date.

Riverside Park Option



Features

- 11no transit pitches (5no double units and 1no single, numbers shown)
- Office located at eastern perimeter, adjacent entrance
- Bin / waste store (size tbc)
- Internal access road arrangement creates 'turning head' for refuse lorry operations
- Pitch sizes and accommodation based on Westhampnett Transit facility (refer Annex 1)
- Gate / height barriers at each end of access road
- Potential Children's play area space at west of site
- Pole mounted CCTV provision at each end of site to cover whole site and access road

Benefits

- Riverside site enjoying views across landscape
- Office location allows passive surveillance of entrance
- Majority of pitches on 'high' southern side, minimising exposure to flood risk
- Irregular form of northern edge conducive to existing vegetation / trees and relationship to River Thames
- Wooded buffer area to east screens facility from mobile home park
- CCTV significantly enhances ease of management and mitigates site damage and fly tipping

Challenges

- Site is wholly within EA Flood Risk 3 (worst case) designation from adjacent River Thames and is therefore contrary to design guidance published by the Department for Communities and Local Government: 'Designing Gypsy & Traveller Sites'
- Site is in 3rd party ownership
- Most services not available nearby
- Securing adequate access rights on long access road
- Noise from adjacent railway line
- Adjoining land, including access road, at significant risk from fly-tipping/grazing/kenelling etc. CCTV may assist management but river footpath particularly at risk beyond range of any CCTV
- Management of buffer zone and other vacant land will require regular maintenance and protection Potential conflict with adjoining mobile home site and nearby Travelling Showpeople site
- Control of vermin from adjacent railway embankment
- Risk of waste and pollution into River Thames

 site extent

Option Plan (1:500 at A3)

Smallmead_Viability Cost Information

Elemental Summary					
Project: HCC		Details: Smallmead			
Building: RBC Gypsy and Traveller site					
%	Quantity	Unit	Rate	Subtotal	Total
Smallmead					
Buildings					
Amenities blocks	100	m2	3,820.00	382,000	
Office	22	m2	3,820.00	84,040	
Subtotal					466,000
Site works					
Fencing & gates					
Perimeter fencing	272	m	125	34,000	
Gates	3	Nr	1,500	4,500	
Hard Paving					
Roads	731	m2	165	120,615	
Amenity & office Hard paving	1,003	m2	150	150,450	
Bin store					
Bin store (fencing inc in fencing)	57	m2	150	8,550	
Soft Landscaping					
Soft landscaping	670	m2	50	33,500	
Subtotal					352,000
Services Infrastructure					
Fire main	1	item	2,750.00	2,750	
Water	1	item	49,500.00	49,500	
Fire alarm	1	item	5,500.00	5,500	
Incoming electricity	1	item	49,500.00	49,500	
Data / IT	1	item	8,800.00	8,800	
Street lighting	1	item	5,500.00	5,500	
Subtotal					122,000
Preliminaries	18	%	940,000	169,000	
OH&P	10	%	1,109,000	111,000	
Subtotal					280,000
Professional Fees	16.50	%	1,220,000	201,300	
Pre construction fee	1	item	10,000.00	10,000	
Direct Costs	1.50	%	1,220,000	18,300	
Subtotal					230,000
Contingency	15	%	1,450,000	217,500	
Subtotal					218,000
VAT	20	%	1,668,000	333,600	
Subtotal					334,000
Inflation to 1Q2021	5.08	%	2,002,000	102,000	

Elemental Summary					
Project: HCC		Details: Smallmead			
Building: RBC Gypsy and Traveller site					
%	Quantity	Unit	Rate	Subtotal	Total
Subtotal					102,000
TOTAL					2,100,000
Additional items					
Kids play area (proposed)	0	m2	186	0	0
Costs based on site plans only					
No allowance for poor or contaminated ground					
No allowances for legal or land purchase costs					
Costs have been inflated to a start in the 1st Quarter 2021					
GFA: 0.00 m2					2,100,000

The elemental summary shown opposite indicates a viability estimate (at 1Q 2021) for Smallmead of:

£2,100,000



Riverside Park_Viability Cost Information

The elemental summary shown opposite indicates a viability estimate (at 1Q 2021) for Riverside Park of:

£3,990,000

Elemental Summary					
Project: HCC		Details: Riverside Park			
Building: RBC Gypsy and Traveller site					
%	Quantity	Unit	Rate	Subtotal	Total
Riverside Park					
Buildings					
Amenities blocks	166	m2	3,820	634,120	
Office	22	m2	3,820	84,040	
	Subtotal				718,000
Site works					
Fencing & gates					
Perimeter fencing	302	m	125	37,750	
Gates	2	Nr	1,500	3,000	
Hard Paving					
Roads	3,659	m2	165	603,735	
Amenity & office Hard paving	1,376	m2	150	206,400	
Bin store					
Bin store (fencing inc in fencing)	52	m2	150	7,800	
Soft Landscaping					
Soft landscaping	734	m2	50	36,700	
	Subtotal				895,000
Services Infrastructure					
Fire main	1	item	2,750	2,750	
Water	1	item	71,500	71,500	
Fire alarm	1	item	5,500	5,500	
Incoming electricity	1	item	77,000	77,000	
Data / IT	1	item	11,000	11,000	
Street lighting	1	item	7,700	7,700	
	Subtotal				175,000
Preliminaries	18	%	1,788,000	322,000	
OH&P	10	%	2,110,000	211,000	
	Subtotal				533,000
Professional Fees	16.50	%	2,321,000	382,965	
Pre construction fee	1	item	10,000.00	10,000	
Direct Costs	1.50	%	2,321,000	34,815	
	Subtotal				428,000
Contingency	15	%	2,749,000	412,350	
Subtotal					412,000
VAT	20	%	3,161,000	632,200	
Subtotal					632,000
Inflation to 1Q2021	5.08	%	3,793,000	193,000	

22/11/2019 15:43:41

Hampshire County Council

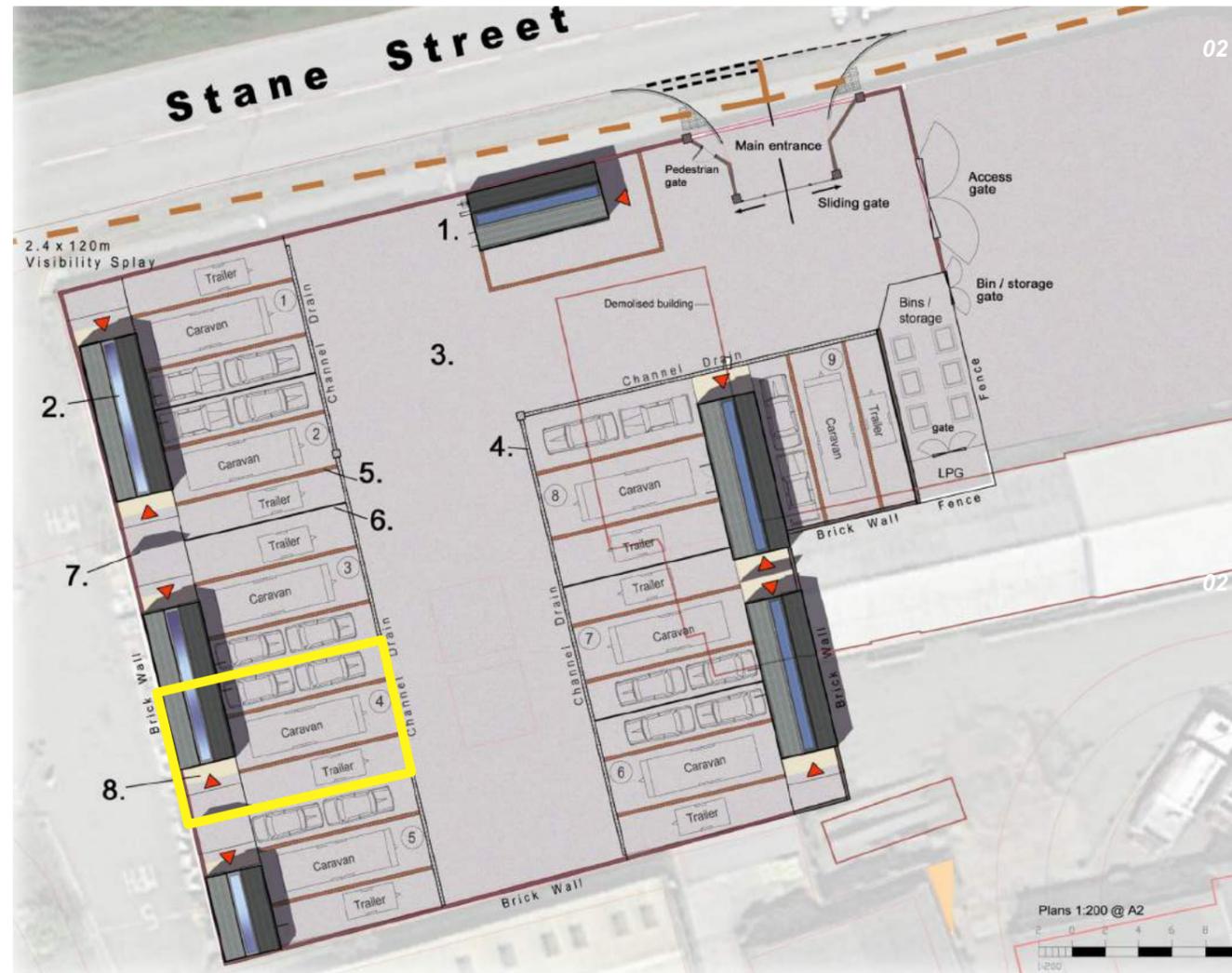
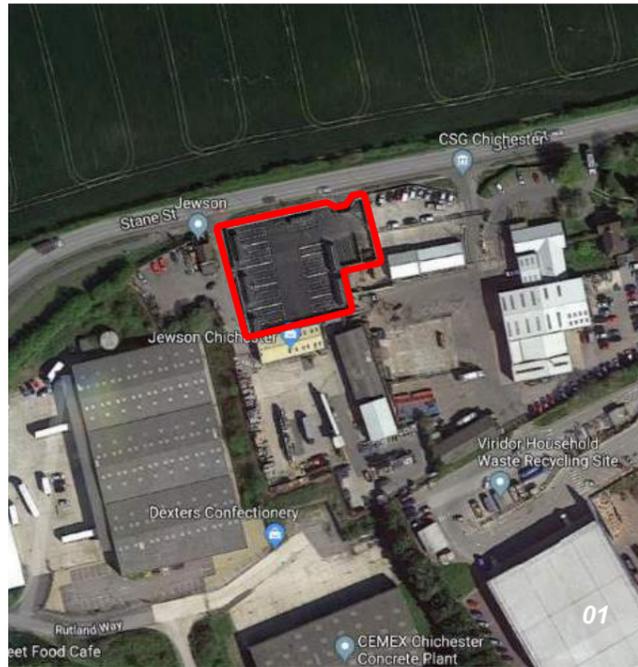
Page 1 of 2

Elemental Summary					
Project: HCC		Details: Riverside Park			
Building: RBC Gypsy and Traveller site					
%	Quantity	Unit	Rate	Subtotal	Total
				Subtotal	193,000
				TOTAL	3,990,000
Additional items					
Kids play area (proposed)	230	m2	186	43,000	
Costs based on site plans only					
No allowance for poor or contaminated ground					
No allowances for legal or land purchase costs					
Costs have been inflated to a start in the 1st Quarter 2021					
					3,990,000
GFA: 0.00 m2					



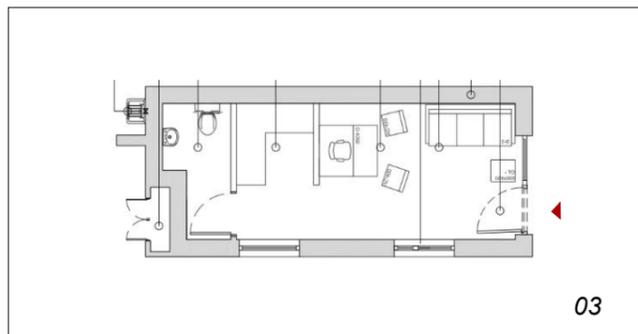
Annex 1

Westhampnett Depot Transit Facility

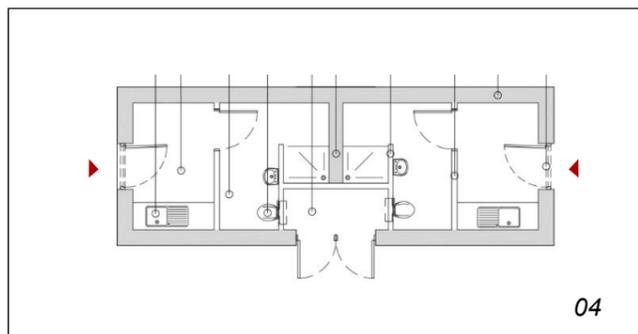


Notes on Westhampnett Depot Transit Facility
(from information provided by Barry Jordan-Davis, HCC Senior Gypsy Liaison Officer)

- 9no Pitch Transit Site
- Pitch size approximately 14m x 8m (see yellow box on site plan)
- Completed May 2015, now operational for five years
- West Sussex management – Mon to Fri (9 to 5)
- Very limited damage and fly tipping on site
- Residents sign licence and pay £77 per week rent inc. water with £150 returnable deposit
- Electricity via smart meter – residents pay site manager who puts electric on meter manually – no access by residents and no emergency.
- No fences between pitches, demarcation via white lines markings
- Each pitch has its own utility block (sink / toilet / hand basin and shower – all push button)
- Highly robust construction and specification of fittings to minimise damage potential
- Dedicated pitch facility block (in single and twin versions) encourage sense of ownership (unlike facility in Brighton which has shared facilities and suffers damage)
- No mains drainage (Wessex Water refused) - cesspits have to be emptied weekly with attendant costs



03



04



05



06

- 01 Aerial plan view (site extent indicated in red line)
- 02 Site Plan
- 03 Plan of manager office building
- 04 Plan of utility block (twin version)
- 05 View of perimeter boundary wall from Stane Street
- 06 Closer view of facility office building adjacent entrance

Annex 2

Reference has been made in this report to design guidance published by the Department for Communities and Local Government: 'Designing Gypsy & Traveller Sites' (May 2008)

Extracts are reproduced here.

Introduction

3.3 Sites should not be situated near refuse sites, industrial processes or other hazardous places. . . to ensure that the health and safety of prospective residents are not at risk.

3.4 Factors which are important for the sustainability of a site, for instance:

- Not locating sites in areas of high flooding risk
- not located in polluted or hazardous locations

3.16 Sites must not be located on contaminated land

3.18 ...sites adjacent to main roads. . .and railway lines, careful regard must be given to:

- The health and safety of children and others who will live on the site; and
- The greater noise transference through the walls of trailers and caravans than through the walls of conventional housing, and the need for design measures(for instance noise barriers) to abate the impact on quality of life and health.

3.20 Where there is a risk from flooding the degree of risk must be determined prior to considering allocation or development of a site by reference to Planning Policy Statement 25: Development and Flood Risk (PPS25), the Environment Agency's Flood Map and the local planning authority's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

3.21 Annex D of PPS25 sets out a risk based sequential approach to be applied at all stages of the planning process. A Sequential Test is to steer new development to areas at the lowest probability of flooding.

- Table D.1 of that annex specifies three flood zones of low, medium and high probability.
- PPS25 table D.2 makes it clear that caravan sites for permanent residence are considered "highly vulnerable" and should not be permitted in areas where there is a high probability that flooding will occur (Zone 3 areas).

Caravan sites which are occupied on a short term occupancy basis are classified as "more vulnerable" and proposals for their development in Zone 3 areas would need to pass the Exception Test outlined in PPS25, Annex D, if there are no other sites at a lower flood risk.

3.22 It is recognised that in some areas a high proportion of land is at risk from flooding (Flood Zones 2 and 3) but the requirements of PPS 25 should still be taken fully into account before taking any development proposal forward. Where a flood risk exists, advice from the Environment Agency should be sought at the earliest possible stage on the likelihood of flooding, depths and velocities that might be expected and the availability of warning services, to see whether the proposals might be acceptable.

3.23 Where the Exception Test needs to be applied there may be opportunities to consider design issues, such as raising the level of a site so that accommodation will be above the expected flood level, taking climate change into account. This would protect amenity buildings, service provision etc that cannot be removed from the site when a flood warning is issued. However, a key consideration is that residents can safely evacuate the site in response to flood warnings and that emergency services would be able to reach the site to ensure residents' safety. This is an essential requirement to pass the Exception Test.

Transit

8.1 Although transit sites may be in use all year round, they are not intended or designed to be used as permanent accommodation by individual households. The guidance below therefore reflects that expectation. However developers should note that, in the past and due to the shortage of permanent sites, some transit sites have become permanent sites by default, even though the standard of facilities provided are not conducive to long term stays.

8.3 The guidance for permanent sites largely also applies to transit sites except that the importance of proximity to community facilities is primarily in respect of the need for access to schools

4.11 Where an existing site may be located near an industrial area or process, or a main road, fencing and planting may be used to screen out unpleasant characteristics.

4.13 Measures to protect the safety of site residents from fire are of paramount importance, and it is essential that a clear gap of 3 metres is provided within the inside of all site perimeter boundaries as a fire prevention measure

8.7 Orientation of pitches

4.14 As with housing for the settled community, site layout and design should ensure a degree of privacy for individual households (for instance by ensuring that neighbours cannot directly overlook each other's living quarters), but without inhibiting the important sense of community.

4.17 In designing the layout of a site enough space must be provided to permit the easy maneuverability of resident's own living accommodation both to the site and subsequently on to a pitch

8.8 Health and safety

4.20 When designing the layout of a site, careful consideration must be given to the health and safety of residents, and in particular children, given the likelihood of a high density of children on the site and relatively high levels of vehicle ownership amongst some groups of Gypsies and Travellers for towing caravans and employment purposes.

4.21 It is important to ensure that appropriate traffic calming measures are considered for all sites. Care should be taken when introducing speed humps and other measures.

8.9 Access for emergency vehicles

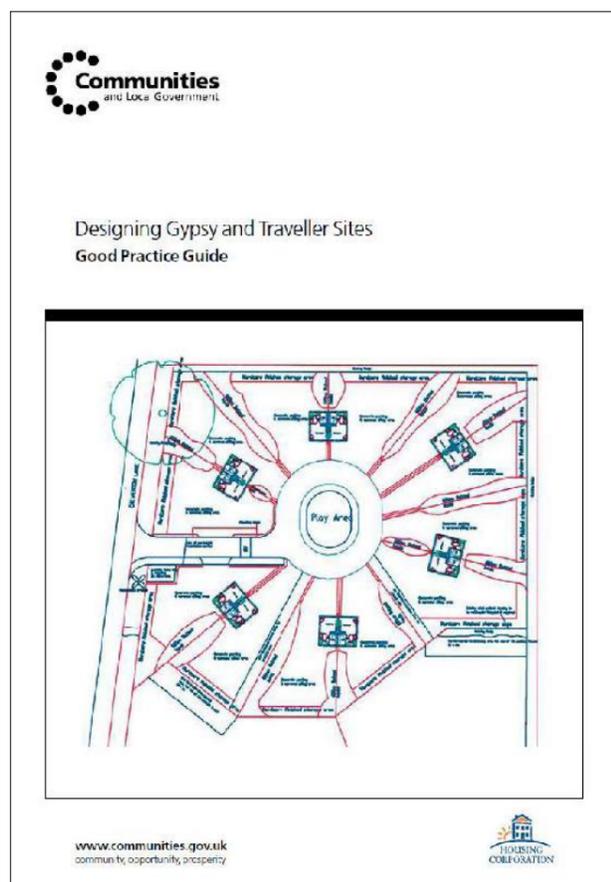
4.25 In designing a site, all routes for vehicles on the site, and for access to the site, must allow easy access for emergency vehicles and safe places for turning vehicles

4.27 Roads must not be less than 3.7 metres wide, or if they form part of a one way traffic system, 3 metres wide

8.10 Security

4.34 Site layout should maximise natural surveillance enabling residents to easily oversee all areas of the site. Scheme specific advice on security provision for the site should be obtained from the Police Architectural Liaison Officer for the area.

4.35 In cases where a site manager's office is provided on a site this should ideally be in a location which can be easily found by visitors and ideally situated at the front of the site ensuring that it has a view which increases security but is not intrusive to residents



4.36 To avoid disputes and provide defensible space, it is important to provide clear delineation of public communal areas eg play areas and private space, with boundaries that indicate clearly where individual pitches begin and end. It is recommended that communal areas without a clear usage are avoided in the design as they may attract vandalism, fly tipping or unauthorised caravans.

8.11 *Balance between soft and hard landscaping*

The guidance for permanent sites applies although soft landscaping on transit sites can be more difficult to maintain. As transit sites are only intended for short stays there is less need for soft landscaping but this does not rule out maintaining the general ambience of the site to a limited and cost effective degree.

8.12 *Parking*

In the light of experience it is recommended that parking space for at least two vehicles is provided on each individual pitch at a minimum size of 2.4m x 4.8 metres each.

8.13 *Density and spacing between vehicles*

The guidance for permanent sites applies, except where the local Fire Officer has agreed alternative arrangements that provide the same degree of fire safety.

8.14 *Inclusion of work/animal space*

The guidance for permanent sites applies

8.15 *Accommodation for a Resident Manager*

Transit sites may present particular management challenges and depending on local circumstances and sufficient usage, it is recommended that provision is generally made for a resident manager. As the resident manager will be living on the transit site on a semi-permanent basis, facilities for the manager should comply with the guidance for permanent sites, including the provision of an amenity building.

Individual pitches

8.27 *Hard standing*

The guidance for permanent sites applies.

8.28 *Size of pitch*

It is important to ensure that wherever possible each pitch is of a size sufficient to accommodate two touring caravans, two parking spaces and private amenities.

8.29 *Private amenities*

It has been found that the majority of Gypsies and Travellers prefer private amenities on each pitch including a toilet, wash basin and shower with hot and cold water supply. An illustration of a simple fixed utility building for a transit site is at Annex B.8).

8.30 Depending on the degree of usage, consideration could be given to providing portable facilities on a transit site to meet these needs. Where transit sites are empty for lengthy periods there is a risk of vandalism to facilities and it may be preferable for these to be removed until the site is reoccupied. In adopting this approach, it is sensible to ensure that permanent waste and water pipework is in place for facilities to be easily reinstalled.

Car parking

4.44 A key element for the site is the provision of adequate parking space for resident's use. Parking spaces must be a minimum of 2.4 x 4.8 metres

4.45 Resident parking should largely be provided for on individual pitches (see 7.3) but a site could also contain additional parking facilities for visitors, as parking on the roadside could otherwise impede access of fire and other emergency services. However separate parking areas may present security considerations for residents in some cases and should therefore be situated in an area in good sight of the warden's office and site residents generally

Density and spacing of caravans and trailers

4.47 To ensure fire safety it is essential that every trailer, caravan or park home must be not less than 6 metres from any other trailer, caravan or park home that is occupied separately

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & CONTRACTS

TO:	POLICY COMMITTEE (ACTING AS SOLE MEMBER FOR BRIGHTER FUTURES FOR CHILDREN)		
DATE:	1 November 2021		
TITLE:	Brighter Futures for Children Limited - Reserved Matters		
LEAD COUNCILLORS:	Cllr Jason Brock Cllr Liz Terry Cllr Ashley Pearce	PORTFOLIOS:	Corporate Governance Children's Services Education
SERVICE:	N/A	WARDS:	All
LEAD OFFICER:	Kate Graefe	TEL:	0118 937 4132
JOB TITLE:	Assistant Director of Procurement and Contracts	E-MAIL:	kate.graefe@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To report to the Policy Committee in its capacity as the sole member of Brighter Futures for Children Ltd and make a decision as sole member regarding the appointment of a new Independent Non-Executive Director for BFfC.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 For Policy Committee in its capacity as sole member for BFfC to ratify the proposed appointment of Calvin Pike as a new Independent Non-Executive Director for BFfC.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In October 2018 the Council approved the formation of a separate Company for the delivery of Children's Services in Reading; Brighter Futures for Children Limited (BFfC). The Company subsequently began delivery of services in December 2018.
- 3.2 BFfC is a company limited by guarantee without share capital and its sole member is Reading Borough Council. The Company's Articles of Association set out its obligations in terms of reporting to the Council as Sole Member as well as the matters which are reserved to the Sole Member. The employment of a new Independent Non-Executive Director is listed as a reserved matter in the Articles, hence this report requesting their consideration and agreement.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The Company conducted a skills assessment of the Board earlier in 2021 and concluded that the skills of the current Non-Executive Directors align with the Company requirements. To further enhance and provide additional breadth of skills to the Board as well as support future continuity and succession planning (given all

current Non-Executive Directors have the same end of term date of 14th November 2024), a need for an additional Non-Executive Director has also been identified.

- 4.2 In line with this, Policy Committee on 8th March 2021 agreed:
- a. to approve the reappointment of Tony Byrne, Nicola Gilham and Paul Snell as Non-Executive Directors of Brighter Futures for Children for a second term of office (three years) from 15 November 2021 to 14 November 2024;
 - b. To endorse the recruitment of a further Non-Executive Director with significant expertise and experience at a senior level in Education and/or with commissioning, commercial and business skills.
- 4.3 The new Non-Executive Director recruitment has focused on employing someone with significant Education experience. The appointment has been conducted with the Lead Councillor for Education, Ashley Pearce, as part of the panel.
- 4.4 Calvin Pike will start as a NED on 2 November (subject to Policy Committee) decision. Calvin was the unanimous candidate for the panel. He comprehensively matched the role profile and job requirements. He has extensive, successful leadership experience in education and demonstrated strong commitment to addressing inequality in education and improving life chances for children and families in Reading. Calvin has worked for the Department for Education as a DfE Education Adviser and is an Ofsted accredited schools inspector. He currently Chairs the London Learning Consortium and has Chaired an interim executive board.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 5.1 In Spring 2021 the Council refreshed its Corporate Plan, incorporating a number of major change projects under 3 themes:
1. healthy environment
 2. thriving communities
 3. inclusive growth
- 5.2 This proposal aligns with the delivery of the BfFC Business Plan, which forms part of the Thriving Communities theme.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).
- 6.2 There are no environmental or climate change implications arising from this report.

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 7.1 Not applicable

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to–
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;

- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

8.2 An Equality Impact Assessment is not relevant to the requested decisions.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 As stated within the report, the appointment of an Independent Non-Executive Director is a Reserved Matter within the Company Articles, hence seeking the required agreement prior to formal appointment.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The recruitment and remuneration costs will be met from within the contract sum agreed to be paid to BfC for FY2021/22, as already provisioned in the Council MTFP and BfC Business Plan.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 There are none.

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank