

REPORT TO GYPSY/TRAVELLER SUB COMMITTEE – 1st MAY 2024

LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY - GYPSY/TRAVELLER

1 Executive Summary/Recommendations

1.1 The [Local Housing Strategy 2018 - 2023](#) was agreed by Communities Committee on 21st December 2017. In line with Scottish Government guidance, this must be reviewed every five years.

1.2 This report seeks comments from the Gypsy/Traveller Sub Committee on the proposed actions and performance indicators which will be presented as part of the revised Local Housing Strategy to Communities Committee following full consultation.

1.2 The Committee is recommended to:

1.2.1 Provide comment to Communities Committee on proposed actions and performance indicators as part of the consultation of the revised Local Housing Strategy.

2 Decision Making Route

2.1 The [Local Housing Strategy 2018 - 2023](#) was agreed by Communities Committee on 21st December 2017. The Local Housing Strategy (LHS) is the strategic vision for housing delivery and housing related services. The document should be reviewed every five years. The LHS will link with other Council Strategic Plans, including the Local Development Plan.

2.2 Following identification of strategic priorities, the service should ensure that there are sufficient measures in place to monitor the progress of these targets. The outcomes of the Local Housing Strategy 2018 – 2023, in terms of the Minority Ethnic priority, are summarised in **Appendix 1**.

3 Discussion

3.1 When reviewing and developing a new Local Housing Strategy, the [Housing Need and Demand Assessment](#) (HNDA) is the main evidence base used to inform the process.

3.2 The HNDA is developed in partnership with Aberdeen City Council and is a common evidence base to enable both Local Authorities to meet its statutory obligations.

3.3 The HNDA was given robust and credible status by the Centre of Housing Market Analysis (CHMA) in January 2024.

3.4 Key points highlighted in the HNDA relating to the Gypsy/Traveller community are summarised below.

- The population size of Gypsy/Traveller groups is relatively unknown. Gypsy/Traveller was added as an ethnic group in the 2011 census; however, it is considered that data from this time may be unreliable due to a reluctance of the community to identify as such. Updated data from the 2022 census is due to be released in May 2024 which may provide a more accurate indication of the population in Aberdeenshire and Scotland.
- The HNDA acknowledges that additional sites and potential locations are required to meet the needs of this community. While there has been land identified, there has been a lack of progress in terms of delivery.
- For those families who wish to reside on a private site, challenges are faced in terms of costs, planning permission and the need to carry out Environmental Impact Assessments. From 2018 – 2023, four planning applications for private sites were received by Aberdeenshire Council, one which was approved with a further three refused, withdrawn or pending at the time of writing the HNDA.
- Gypsy/Travellers are more likely to report long-term health problems and poor educational outcomes, and these issues can be exacerbated by their living conditions.

3.5 At a workshop held on 30th November with members of the Communities Committee, five new priorities were agreed for the Local Housing Strategy 2024 – 2029. Priority 4, Increase the supply and ensure best use of particular needs accommodation, includes housing for minority ethnic communities.

3.6 The revised LHS is currently being drafted and will be consulted on in the coming months. Under the actions of the minority ethnic community section, it is proposed that 4 actions would be monitored in terms of Gypsy/Travellers. These are:

- Better incomes in and out of work.
- Improve access to public services.
- Tackle racism and discrimination.
- Improve Gypsy/Traveller representation.

These actions align with the COSLA and Scottish Government's National Action Plan for Improving the Lives of Gypsy/Travellers in Scotland.

3.7 In addition to these overarching actions, a number of performance indicators will also be monitored and reported on as part of the annual LHS review. The proposed indicators include:

- Number of Unauthorised Encampments.
- Adherence to the Code of Conduct for Gypsy/Travellers.
- Prejudice and Discrimination Reporting.
- Number of Privately run Gypsy/Traveller sites in Aberdeenshire.
- Number of local authority run Gypsy/Traveller sites in Aberdeenshire.

3.8 At the Gypsy/Traveller Sub Committee on 1st May, members are asked to review the proposed priorities and performance measures and provide comment on any additional information they would like to add in terms of this priority. Consultation feedback will be incorporated to the draft document prior to final reports being presented to Communities Committee later this year.

4 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

4.1 This report contributes to all of the Council priorities and in particular to resilient communities, health and wellbeing, education and infrastructure.

Pillar	Priority
Our People	Learning for Life Health & Wellbeing
Our Environment	Climate Change Resilient Communities
Our Economy	Economic Growth Infrastructure and public assets

4.2 This report helps deliver against Aberdeenshire Children's Services Plan and the priority of Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing. This report helps deliver on the Local Outcome Improvement Plan Priority of Child Poverty.

4.3 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation is agreed.

Subject	Yes	No	N/A
Financial			X
Staffing			X
Equalities and Fairer Duty Scotland			X
Children and Young People's Rights and Wellbeing			X
Climate Change and Sustainability			X
Health and Wellbeing			X
Town Centre First			X

4.4 There are no staffing or financial implications.

- 4.5 An integrated impact assessment has not been undertaken at this stage. A full IIA will be presented to all area committees and Communities Committee with the draft Local Housing Strategy.
- 4.6 No risks have been identified at this stage as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level.

5 Scheme of Governance

- 5.1 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and their comments are incorporated within the report and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.
- 5.2 The Sub-Committee is able to consider this item because it relates to a function of the Sub-Committee to develop and approve Council policies and practices in respect of a) addressing the accommodation needs which meets the needs, culture and lifestyle of Gypsy/Travellers and unauthorised encampments.

Alan Wood
Director of Infrastructure Services

Report prepared by Hannah McSherry, Housing Manager
Date 11th April 2024

List of Appendices –

Appendix 1 – Local Housing Strategy 2018-2023: Outcomes and Achievements –
Minority Ethnic Priority