

# **The Vale of Glamorgan Council**

## **Cabinet Meeting: 31 July, 2017**

### **Report of the Cabinet Member for Housing and Building Services**

#### **Vale of Glamorgan Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment May 2016**

##### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To agree a number of minor amendments to the Vale of Glamorgan Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment May 2016 (GTAA) to enable its approval by the Minister for Communities and Children.

##### **Recommendation**

1. That Cabinet accept the minor modifications required to the Assessment listed at [Appendix A](#) to this report, prior to its publication.

##### **Reason for the Recommendation**

1. To finalise the document for publication.

##### **Background**

2. The assessment of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs, and the duty to make provision for sites where the assessment identifies need, became statutory requirements under Section 3 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014.
3. The definition of 'Gypsies and Travellers' for the purposes of this accommodation assessment process is contained with section 108 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014. Gypsies and Travellers mean:

'(a) Persons of a nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin, including:

- persons who, on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependant's educational or health needs or old age, have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, and
- members of an organised group of travelling show people or circus people (whether or not travelling together as such); and
- all other persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism or of living in a mobile home.'

4. In compliance with the Act the Council undertook a procurement exercise through the Sell2Wales website and Opinion Research Services (ORS) were appointed to undertake the GTAA in accordance with the Welsh Government up to date requirements and guidance document 'Undertaking Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments May 2015'.
5. The GTAA was completed by ORS in May 2016 and subsequently adopted by Cabinet on 6th June 2016 (Cabinet Minute 3206), prior to its submission to the Minister for Communities and Children for approval.
6. Clarification was subsequently sought by the Minister on a number of points in the GTAA and following the Council's responses, his approval was received on the 28th March 2017, subject to a list of modifications being carried out prior to its publication.
7. As Cabinet on 6th June 2016 did not approve any delegated authority for the adopted GTAA to be amended, in line with any changes required by the Minister, a list of the Minister's required changes are attached at [Appendix A](#) for clarity.

### Relevant Issues and Options

8. Whilst the Minister has requested that specific minor changes be made to the GTAA, there have been no major changes, including no change to the identified number of gypsies and travellers in the Vale of Glamorgan or the need for permanent pitches for the period 2015 to 2020, which remain as follows:

Type	Need Arising	Need
Accommodated		
Current residential demand	2	
Future residential demand (yr. 5)	0	
Planned residential supply		0
Unmet need (yr. 5)	2	

9. The Council is next required to undertake and submit a new Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment in accordance with its statutory requirements under the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 by 24th February 2021.

### Resource Implications (Financial and Employment)

10. There continues to be resource implications for the Council to meet the provision for Gypsies and Travellers site in the Vale of Glamorgan. However, the Welsh Government's Gypsy and Traveller Sites Capital Grant offers 100% funding to a maximum of £1.5million per project which can be sought to assist the Council.

### Sustainability and Climate Change Implications

11. The completion of the GTAA informs the need for accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers in the Vale of Glamorgan which if delivered would meet the requirements of the Welsh Government Guidance in its design. This will assist in minimising the impact of climate change. In addition, the proposal will help the long term sustainability of the Vale of Glamorgan by meeting the accommodation needs of some of its residents and contribute to community sustainability.

## **Legal Implications (to Include Human Rights Implications)**

12. The Council has a statutory duty to undertake a GTAA under Section 3 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014.
13. In the absence of an approved Local Authority site Welsh Government Guidance requires that Councils consider 'toleration' of unauthorised encampments as in the current circumstances.

## **Crime and Disorder Implications**

14. An understanding of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation issues is essential to make properly planned provision and avoid the problems associated with ad hoc or unauthorised sites. A comprehensive GTAA and strategy to meet the need identified will greatly strengthen the ability of the Council to respond swiftly and firmly to inappropriate unauthorised developments and encampments and help to avoid these in the future.

## **Equal Opportunities Implications (to include Welsh Language issues)**

15. The development of a GTAA is supportive of the Council's Equal Opportunities ethos as it identifies the mechanisms needed to increase access to a stable home for some of the residents of the Vale of Glamorgan.
16. The Council's Local Housing Strategy 2015-20 includes an aim which focuses on promoting equality of access to housing and housing services:  
Aim 4: To promote equality of access to housing and housing services. This aim includes a number of objectives which include:  
Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation.  
Respond to the diverse housing needs of people in the Vale of Glamorgan.

## **Corporate/Service Objectives**

17. This report is consistent with the Corporate Plan 2016 - 20, as follows:  
Well-being Outcome 1: An inclusive and safe Vale.  
Objective 2: Providing decent homes and safe communities:  
Provide appropriate accommodation and support services for particularly vulnerable groups.  
Increase the number of sustainable, affordable homes.  
Well-being Outcome 2: An environmentally responsible and prosperous Vale:  
Objective 4: Promoting sustainable development and protecting our environment:  
Adopt and implement the Local Development Plan as a framework for sustainable development in the Vale of Glamorgan.
18. This report is also consistent with the Council's Local Housing Strategy 2015-20 which aims to ensure that 'Vale of Glamorgan residents have access to affordable, good quality suitable housing and housing advice and support'.

## **Policy Framework and Budget**

19. This report is consistent with the Policy Framework and is a matter for Executive decision by Cabinet.

## **Consultation (including Ward Member Consultation)**

20. No ward Member consultation has been undertaken as the GTAA relates to the whole of the Vale of Glamorgan. Consultation will be undertaken with the appropriate ward Members when the location of a proposed Gypsy and Traveller site is identified.

## **Relevant Scrutiny Committee**

21. Homes and Safe Community
22. Economy and Environment

## **Background Papers**

Undertaking Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments Guidance - Welsh Government May 2015.

Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites Guidance - Welsh Government May 2015.

Circular 30/2007 Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites.

## **Contact Officer**

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## **Officers Consulted**

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## **Responsible Officer:**

Rob Thomas, Managing Director