

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT DOCUMENT ADVISORY GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 3 AUGUST 2009

Present: Councillor Lusty (Chairman), and
Councillors Chittenden, English, Horne, Marchant,
Moriarty, Nelson-Gracie, Robertson, Mrs Stockell,
Thick, J.A. Wilson and Mrs Wilson

REFERRED MATTER

21. **PARTIAL REVIEW OF THE REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY FOR GYPSIES,
TRAVELLERS AND TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLE**

The Group considered the report of the Assistant Director of Development and Community Strategy regarding the partial review of the Regional Spatial Strategy for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

The Group was informed that following the submission of comments from this consultation, an Examination in Public will be held in February 2010. The Examination Panel Report will recommend changes to the submitted document which will be subject to consultation and then the outcomes of that consultation will be reported to Government to make a final decision by the end of 2010.

The Group felt it was important to ensure that the Council has a plan to gain help from Parish Councils and other bodies who may wish to support the Council's position at the Examination in Public.

The Group were concerned about what would be deemed as 'sustainability criteria' and felt it was important that this Council agreed the sustainability criteria for the provision of sites.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO CABINET:

1. That the council reaffirms its view that the setting of numerical pitch requirements for Gypsies and Travellers should be underpinned by sustainability and planning criteria and that officers request GOSE to allocate sites on an environmentally sustainable basis and that the South East Plan Policy should require that Local Authorities put forward sustainability criteria for the provision of sites in their Development Plan Documents;
2. That the council reaffirms its view that there should be an element of redistribution of future pitch requirements for Gypsies and Travellers across the region and that this is best achieved through a 50% redistribution element, rather than the 25% element inherent in the

Preferred Option, resulting in a requirement for Maidstone borough of 31 pitches;

3. That, in view of Travelling Showpeople's specific site requirements future pitch provision is best met through a needs based approach. This would result in there being no requirement for additional pitches in Maidstone borough;
4. That the approach of joint-working at a county level on transit site provision be supported, acknowledging that the county level advice which does not identify a need for transit provision in Maidstone borough continues to be supported; and
5. That all advice areas (counties and county groupings) in the region be required to collect the relevant data on transit site needs and to act to address the identified requirement, as the Kent and Medway Advice area has done already.
6. That delegated authority be given to the Assistant Director of Development and Community Strategy to make the Council's case at the Examination in Public, in association with other Kent authorities as appropriate.
7. That the Cabinet seek all opportunities to maximise public support for the Council's position in the run up to the Examination in Public.