

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

LEAD MEMBER FOR PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 20 FEBRUARY 2023

Attendees:

Lead Members:	Councillor Cooper, Lead Member for Planning and Infrastructure
----------------------	---

18. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

19. EXEMPT ITEMS

RESOLVED: That all items be taken in public, as proposed.

20. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23 JANUARY 2023

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 January 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed.

21. WATER SUPPLY CONSULTATION

RESOLVED: That the proposed responses to the three water supply consultations at amended appendix 1 of the report be approved.

(See Record of Decision)

22. GYPSY, TRAVELLER AND TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLE DPD – SCOPING, ISSUES AND OPTIONS (REGULATION 18A) CONSULTATION AND CALL FOR SITES EXERCISE

RESOLVED: That

1. The Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Development Plan Document – scoping, issues and options (Regulation 18a) with suggested amendments (**Amended Appendix 1 to the report**) is agreed for a seven-week public consultation between 28th February and 17th April 2023.
2. A targeted Call for Sites exercise takes place concurrent to the Regulation 18a consultation (**Appendices 4 and 5 to the report**).
3. The Interim Local Plan Review Director be given delegated authority to finalise the format of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople DPD Scoping, Issues and Options Document for presentation to the Lead Member for Planning and Infrastructure, including any minor corrections required.

(See Record of Decision)

23. DURATION OF MEETING

8.25 p.m. to 8.35 p.m.

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

RECORD OF DECISION OF THE LEAD MEMBER FOR PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Decision Made: 20 February 2023

Water Supply Consultation

Issue for Decision

This decision covers three water supply consultations. One by the regional water company alliance (Water Resource South East), and the others by the water supply utility companies that operate in the Borough (South East Water & Southern Water).

The consultations referred to in this decision include:

- Water Resources South East – Draft Best Value Regional Plan
- South East Water – Draft Water Resources Management Plan
- Southern Water - Draft Water Resources Management Plan

Decision Made

That the proposed responses to the three water supply consultations at the amended appendix 1 of the report are approved.

Reasons for Decision

1.1 There are three consultations running concurrently on water supply. These involve two water companies operating in the Borough (South East Water & Southern Water) and the south east regional alliance of water companies (Water Resource South East), which covers the Borough. The consultations run from **14 November 2022** to **20 February 2023**.

1.2 The consultations are as follows:

- Water Resources South East –Best Value Regional Plan
- South East Water –Water Resources Management Plan
- Southern Water - Water Resources Management Plan

1.3 This decision summarises the consultations. All three consultations have a standard template to collect responses.; The Council's proposed responses to each of the three consultations is attached in Amended Appendix 1.

1.4 There are two water companies that operate within Maidstone Borough providing water supply services. The companies are Southern Water and South East Water. Southern Water supplies water to north the Borough on the border with Medway. Whilst South East Water supplies water to the rest of the Borough.

1.5 Both these companies are required every 5 years to produce a water resource management plan. The aim of the plan is to maintain water supply over the timeframe 2025-2075.

1.6 A third consultation is being run by Water Resource South East (WRSE), and is the Best Value Regional Plan. WRSE is a south east regional alliance of the six operating water companies within its geographical area. WRSE is not directly involved in the provision of water supply. Like the WRMP produced by the water companies the Best Value Regional Plan produced by WRSE assesses the water needs for the region and identifies strategic solutions to the problems identified. The plan covers the same timeframe as the WRMPs and is also similarly a requirement within the water regulatory system.

1.7 It should be noted that outside of these consultations the Council has been engaging with the relevant water companies through the Local Plan Review to confirm if there is capacity for the planned growth. This engagement has taken place at the statutory consultation periods at Regulation 18 and 19, plus through the development of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan that is evidence to support the Local Plan Review. Therefore, water supply capacity has been factored into the Local Plan Review.

Alternatives considered and why rejected

3.1 Option 1: That the Lead Member for Planning & Infrastructure approve the response to the consultation as originally presented in Appendix 1 to the report. This would allow the response to be sent by the submission deadline.

3.2 Option 2: That the Lead Member for Planning & Infrastructure approve the response to the consultation as presented at Amended Appendix 1, which includes the comments of the Planning and Infrastructure Policy Advisory Committee. This would allow the response to be sent by the submission deadline.

3.3 Option 3: That the response at Appendix 1 of this report is not approved by the Lead Member for Planning & Infrastructure. However, this would mean the response would not be sent and the Council's views would not be factored in.

Appendices

Amended Appendix 1: MBC Responses to Water Supply Consultation.

I have read and approved the above decision for the reasons (including possible alternative options rejected) as set out above.

Signed: 
Lead Member for Planning and Infrastructure

Due to the urgency required to submit the consultation response by the deadline of 20 February 2023, this decision was not subject to call-in.

Full details of both the report for the decision taken above and any consideration by the relevant Policy Advisory Committee can be found at the following area of the [website](#)

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

RECORD OF DECISION OF THE LEAD MEMBER FOR PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Decision Made: 20 February 2023

Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople DPD – Scoping, Issues and Options (Regulation 18a) Consultation and Call for Sites exercise

Issue for Decision

This decision introduces the first stage (scoping, issues and options) of public consultation for the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Development Plan Document (DPD). The decision explains the background to the DPD, its relationship with the Local Plan and Local Plan Review, and what the proposed public consultation is seeking to achieve. Further, the decision sets out the reasons for undertaking an additional, targeted, Call for Sites exercise alongside the public consultation.

The consultation document appended provides information on what the Local Planning Authority envisages to be the scope and key issues for the Development Plan Document, with the purpose of gathering feedback from the public and other stakeholders on its content and coverage. Also appended is a key piece of evidence underpinning the DPD – the Interim Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (known as the GTAA). This is an independently prepared interim decision which sets out the unadjusted current and future need for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation over the plan period. The GTAA evidence is not part of the public consultation but is published as supporting evidence as it, and its future iterations, will become a baselining document for the purposes of future work and the examination of the DPD by a government inspector. Finally, the Call for Sites guidance note and response form are also appended to this decision.

The public consultation and call for sites exercise are scheduled for seven weeks starting on 28th February 2023.

Decision Made

That

1. The Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Development Plan Document – scoping, issues and options (Regulation 18a) with suggested amendments (**Amended Appendix 1 to the report**) is agreed for a seven-week public consultation between 28th February and 17th April 2023.
2. A targeted Call for Sites exercise takes place concurrent to the Regulation 18a consultation (**Appendices 4 and 5 to the report**).

3. The Interim Local Plan Review Director be given delegated authority to finalise the format of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople DPD Scoping, Issues and Options Document for presentation to the Lead Member for Planning and Infrastructure, including any minor corrections required.

Reasons for Decision

1.1 The Council has a statutory responsibility through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) to assess and plan for the housing needs of all residents in the borough, including the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople communities.

1.2 Section 124 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 specifies that local housing authorities should consider the needs of people *'residing in or resorting to their district with respect to the provision of sites on which caravans can be stationed, or places on inland waterways where houseboats can be moored'*. The Council is therefore committed to meeting the housing needs of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople communities within the Borough, in the same way as the housing needs of the settled community are planned for in the adopted Local Plan and emerging Local Plan Review.

1.3 At the November 2021 Strategic Planning and Infrastructure committee meeting, it was agreed that the Council would produce a standalone Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Development Plan Document (GT DPD). The reasons for separating this workstream from the wider Local Plan Review were outlined as follows:

- A new Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) was commissioned as part of the Local Plan Review (LPR) evidence base, and survey work commenced to ascertain future needs, via a very experienced consultancy, Opinion Research Services (ORS). However, owing to nationally imposed lockdowns at the time, survey work and household interviews were suspended, and the GTAA delayed. What was evident from the work completed by consultants up to that point, was that the need for new pitches over the LPR plan period was likely to be significant.
- As part of the Local Plan Review process, a Call for Sites exercise was undertaken in 2019, allowing the submission of sites for consideration as allocations for future development. However, only 11 sites were proposed specifically for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople accommodation.

1.4 The early indication of the likely significant need for new pitches, combined with the relatively minimal number of potential additional sites put forward in the initial Call for Sites exercise, led the Council to conclude that the needs of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople could be most appropriately and comprehensively addressed through a separate development plan. This approach allows the necessary time and focus dedicated to establishing the full needs of our communities and the ability to seek to meet those needs. Further, this approach allowed the wider Local Plan Review to continue to progress in line with the published Local Development Scheme (LDS).

1.5 The GT DPD is a policy document that will seek to define a spatial approach and, if necessary, allocate new sites to meet the identified needs of the gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople communities in the borough. It is also proposed to contain development management policies specific to the assessment of planning applications for gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople accommodation. Once adopted, the policies in the GT DPD would supersede all 'saved' GT1 policies from the 2017 Local Plan that are also listed in Appendix 1 of the Local Plan Review.

Alternatives considered and why rejected

2.1 Option 1A: That the Maidstone Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople DPD – Scoping, Issues and Options (Regulation 18a) consultation and Call for Sites exercise take place between 28th February 2023 and 17th April 2023.

2.2 Option 1B: That subject to modifications, the Maidstone Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople DPD – Scoping, Issues and Options (Regulation 18a) consultation and Call for Sites exercise take place between 28th February 2023 and 17th April 2023,

2.3 Option 1C: That neither the Maidstone Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople DPD – Scoping, Issues and Options (Regulation 18a) consultation nor the Call for Sites exercise is conducted at this time.

2.4 Option 2A: That the Interim Local Plan Review Director be given delegated authority to finalise the format of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople DPD Scoping, Issues and Options Document for presentation to the Lead Member for Planning and Infrastructure, including any corrections required.

2.5 Option 2B: That the Interim Local Plan Review Director is not given delegated authority to finalise the format of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople DPD Scoping, Issues and Options Document for presentation to the Lead Member for Planning and Infrastructure, including any corrections required.

I have read and approved the above decision for the reasons (including possible alternative options rejected) as set out above.

Signed: 
Lead Member for Planning and Infrastructure

Full details of both the report for the decision taken above and any consideration by the relevant Policy Advisory Committee can be found at the following area of the [website](#)

Call-In: Should you be concerned about this decision and wish to call it in, please submit a call-in form signed by any three Members to the Proper Officer by: **5pm 28 February 2023**