

Council	Agenda Item 15(f)
21 July 2011	Brighton & Hove City Council

NOTICE OF MOTION

GREEN GROUP

RESPONSIBILITIES TOWARDS TRAVELLING COMMUNITIES

“This council shares the concerns expressed by residents about the behaviour of some members of the Gypsy and Traveller groups visiting the city, and it condemns anti-social or criminal behaviour by any members of the travelling or settled communities. Where such behaviour is evidenced and substantiated, the administration will take appropriate and proportionate action within the bounds of the law.

The council will continue to adopt a fair but firm approach to the issues raised by unauthorised Traveller encampments. Working in partnership with the Police, it uses:

- Government guidance introduced by the previous Government
- Brighton and Hove City Council’s Traveller Strategy, which the previous administration introduced in June 2008.

This council recognises Gypsy and Traveller communities’ heritage and the right to continue their nomadic lifestyle, as enshrined in law. It will continue to work with Friends and Families of Travellers and other organisations to address the problems faced by travelling communities.

It also acknowledges the excellent work of the council’s Traveller Liaison Team and urges all Council Members to behave in a mature, respectful and tolerant way when debating the presence of Gypsy and Traveller groups in the city, in accordance with relevant codes of conduct.

Further, this council recognises that problems posed by inadequate site provision in the city pre-date May 5th 2011 by many years, and has resulted in a yearly merry-go-round of evictions across the city incurring both financial cost and emotional distress to those involved. In particular it regrets that all previous Brighton and Hove administrations have failed to provide a permanent Travellers’ site, which has exacerbated the problems raised by unauthorised Traveller encampments.

Therefore

1. This Council resolves to ask the Cabinet:
 - (a) To continue the search for another permanent Traveller site in the city;
 - (b) To work with other local authorities to seek a regional solution to the provision of Traveller sites;

- (c) To continue with its firm but fair approach to the issues raised by unauthorised Traveller encampments, working in partnership with the Police on special initiatives like Operation Monza, where necessary;
 - (d) To continue its cross-party review of the Traveller Strategy to relieve the pressures created by unauthorized Traveller encampments; and
- (2) The Council welcomes government proposals to ‘raise awareness amongst councillors of their leadership role in relation to traveller site provision; [1].”

Proposed by: Cllr Pete West

Seconded by: Cllr Bill Randall

Supported by: Cllrs Kennedy, Davey, Buckley, Bowden, Deane, Duncan, Follett, Hawtree, Jarrett, Jones, A Kitcat, J Kitcat, Littman, Mac Cafferty, Phillips, Powell, Rufus, Shanks, Summers, Sykes, Wakefield.

[1] ‘Planning for Traveller sites’ Consultation, Department for Communities and Local Government, April 2011.