

<b>Council</b>	<b>Agenda Item 15(f)</b>
21 July 2011	Brighton & Hove City Council

## NOTICE OF MOTION

### LABOUR & CO-OPERATIVE GROUP AMENDMENT

#### RESPONSIBILITIES TOWARDS TRAVELLING COMMUNITIES

To delete the second sentence in paragraph 5 as struck through and insert 3 further paragraphs 6, 7 and 8 as shown in bold italics below:

“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 5<sup>th</sup> 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.~~

***In particular, this council notes the actions taken by previous Labour Administrations that included;***

- ***The provision of the 23 pitch transit site for Travellers at Horsdean.***
- ***The production of the first local Gypsy and Traveller Strategy.***

- ***The setting up of the local Gypsy and Traveller Forum that regularly met with interested residents and other partners to foster better understanding and awareness of Traveller issues.***
- ***The undertaking of a comprehensive needs assessment of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation need in Brighton and Hove in conjunction with partners and Gypsy and Traveller representatives.***
- ***Regional working with neighbouring authorities on the strategic planning for the provision of pitches.***

***Notes that the previous Government;***

- ***Demonstrated its commitment to tackling the supply of permanent Gypsy and Traveller pitches by embedding their provision within its Spatial Planning policies with an allocation requirement placed on all local authorities to provide their fair share of pitches.***
- ***Provided realistic capital funding for local authorities for the building of such sites and that this council has been a beneficiary.***

***Furthermore this council regrets;***

- ***The ill-advised statement from the MP for Brighton Pavilion to the effect that no unauthorised traveller encampment should be moved until sufficient permanent pitches had been provided for them in the city.***
- ***That proposals by the Tory-led Government for the replacement of the strategic and fair approach to the provision of permanent pitches with a watered down, 'light-touch' policy will mean fewer pitches being provided and more pressure on those local authority areas that do provide sites.***

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 Gill Mitchell

Seconded by: Cllr Les Hamilton

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