

CABINET – 01 JUNE 2021**PROCEDURAL MATTERS****Public Questions****Question (1): Mr James Dennison****Pendell Gypsy Roma Traveller (GRT) Camp, Merstham**

Although the business case has not been provided, the details presented raise a number of concerns about the viability and sustainability of the proposal. Can the Cabinet please confirm the following points, critical to the business case, have been taken into account:

- i. Does the capital funding include improvements to the roads approaching the site which are exclusively either single track or in a very poor state of repair?
- ii. As Pendell Camp is on a country lane and has no access to pavements or public transport needed to reach essential services, can you confirm such improvements are included in the budget?
- iii. Pendell Camp was reduced in size from 15 pitches to 4 because SCC were unable to manage anti-social behaviour on the site, what cost has been included in the budget for additional policing?
- iv. The business case includes only rent and a £7.5k contribution to cover running costs, can you please confirm this would cover all running costs including site manager, waste removal, sewage removal, maintenance of the site, refurbishment, processing and admin fees?
- v. A key risk identified in the business case is 'communication with local residents', so why has no communication or public consultation happened (as other councils have done) to mitigate that risk?

Reply:

The capital funding for this scheme, funded jointly by Surrey County Council and the District and Boroughs (except Tandridge District Council, as the host authority) is for the development of the transit pitches on the site. The Council has agreed to fund the design, remediation works and site infrastructure; the District and Boroughs have committed to funding the construction costs. To address the points raised:

- i. Road improvements come under Highways and are subject to the Highways strategic model of works. At this time, the approach roads to Pendell Camp are considered to be in a satisfactory condition, both the Merstham Road/ Bletchingley Road (a two-lane road) and the road into the site itself. However, when the scheme is submitted to planning, Planning Committee members may recommend or make it a condition that local road(s) are improved in respect of this proposed scheme. A recommendation or condition for any such improvements will be addressed at that time, as will any associated costs.
- ii. No such requirements have been identified at this time. However, as per point (i) above, should any requirements emerge during the planning process, then they will be addressed accordingly.
- iii. The Council is working with the District and Borough Councils and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to reduce the impact of unauthorised encampments across the county as a whole, as well as to jointly develop a robust

strategy for the ongoing management of Pendell Camp site. This partnership and collaborative approach is expected to lighten rather than increase police workload regarding any anti-social behaviour.

- iv. There is an agreement in principle with the District and Borough Councils to each contribute £7.5k per annum (total of £82.5k per annum). Discussions with the District and Boroughs are ongoing, but it is expected they will enter into a formal Project Agreement with the Council by the end of September 2021. It is expected that the rental income from the sites will cover the majority of the site's running costs, the additional contribution from the Districts and Boroughs is to cover any excess running costs. The contributions from the District and Boroughs will be assessed annually to ensure the requirement and value remain appropriate and necessary.
- v. Surrey County Council is committed to public engagement and looks forward to hearing from residents and others about this proposed scheme. The scheme will be subject to a robust planning process later this year and as part of this process, members of the public will be able to comment both before an application is made, and when the formal application stage takes place.

Mrs Natalie Bramhall
Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Property
01 June 2021