

Actions arising from previous meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

February 2024



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Outstanding Actions			
Meeting date	Minute	Action Owner	Update
7 February	<p>The Lead Planning Policy & Implementation Officer agreed to follow up on a question about whether the Council needed to have a 5-year land supply for gypsy and traveller sites and the status of this.</p> <p>After emailing – Councillor Beaney Responded with this query:</p> <p>My question was based around the appeal in Over Norton - Part of the reason for allowing it was that we had no site identify. If we don't, why not and if we do where are they - Without them, Do, we stand a much higher rate of losing appeals?</p> <p>On the point of 5 and 5 in H7 is that a rolling 5 or a first come first serve?</p> <p>Councillor Harry St John added this further query - On the same sort of subject I notice that seems to be an ever expanding site and activities (even at night) at Cuckoowood Farm on Cuckoo Lane south of Freeland. Has any planning officer been on a visit to see that and what is going on because it should be as per any consents /conditions? There is a very substantial building and every time I pass the site at night it is lit up inside - after what one would expect be normal working hours... hence my question. There were</p>	<p>Chris Hargraves Janice Bamsey</p>	<p>The O&S Committee were chasing a response to the following action in the minutes from the last meeting on 7 February 2024 .</p> <p>The Lead Planning Policy & Implementation Officer agreed to follow up on a question about whether the Council needed to have a 5-year land supply for gypsy and traveller sites and the status of this.</p> <p>The Government have a separate national policy position statement on travelling communities (updated in December 2023) which says:</p> <p>9. Local planning authorities should set pitch targets for gypsies and travellers as defined in Annex I and plot targets for travelling showpeople as defined in Annex I which address the likely permanent and transit site</p>

	<p>engineering works going on at the entrance the other week with a JCB etc. doing work. I suspect the JCB may be resident on site. A quick analysis of enforcement cases across the District show a significant proportion of cases involve the travelling or related community by comparison to everyone else - one case has been going on for ages with social services, police, ect. involved.</p>	<p>accommodation needs of travellers in their area, working collaboratively with neighbouring local planning authorities. In this respect, Policy H7 of the Local Plan says that: West Oxfordshire will provide at least 5 pitches and 5 plots to meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople respectively from 2016 – 2031. This is obviously a very modest requirement based on the evidence of need at that time and may even have been met in full by now (Janice can probably advise on this point). Paragraph 10 of the Government's position statement says: 10. Local planning authorities should, in producing their Local Plan: a) <u>identify and update annually, a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5 years' worth of sites against their locally set targets</u> 4 b) identify a supply of specific, developable sites, or broad locations for growth, for years 6 to 10 and, where possible, for years 11-15 5 c) consider production of joint development plans that set targets on a cross-authority basis, to provide more</p>
--	--	---

			<p>flexibility in identifying sites, particularly if a local planning authority has special or strict planning constraints across its area (local planning authorities have a duty to cooperate on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries) d) relate the number of pitches or plots to the circumstances of the specific size and location of the site and the surrounding population's size and density e) protect local amenity and environment.</p> <p>On a related note, footnote 41 of the NPPF says:</p> <p>For the avoidance of doubt, a five-year supply of deliverable sites for travellers – as defined in Annex 1 to Planning Policy for Traveller Sites – should be assessed separately, in line with the policy in that document.</p> <p>My understanding is that whilst we have produced a 5-year supply position statement on mainstream housing, we have not produced anything separate for travellers and have never been asked to do so although it is clear that there is a policy requirement to do so. We may have previously included some information in our Annual Monitoring Report but would</p>
--	--	--	--

			<p>need to check that and it is likely to have been more general in terms of permissions granted etc. So in answer to the question, yes there is a national policy requirement for the Council to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5 years' worth of sites against their locally set targets. In terms of the status of this, I am hoping that Janice and Andrew can advise on our position vis a vis the modest 5 pitch and 5 plot targets included in the local plan.</p> <p>It would also be worth making Members aware that work is ongoing in relation to a new assessment of need for travelling communities which would be reflected in the emerging local plan.</p> <p>Janice Bamsey added - Since the adoption of the local plan in 2018, and the requirement to provide at least 5 pitches and 5 plots between 2016 and 2031, referred to in Chris email below, approval has been given for an additional 11 pitches* and 6 plots in West Oxfordshire.</p>
--	--	--	---

			(* located at Fulbrook, Minster Lovell, Barnard Gate and Chipping Norton. Applications for additional pitches are also currently under consideration at the Weald and Eynsham.)
7 February	The Safer Communities Officer agreed to share further information with the Committee about the crime figures for the district and what action was being taken to address the increases in violence against the person offences and rape.	Emmylou Brossard	<p>I was asked about the increase in rape victims and sexual assault victims in West Oxfordshire and would ask Executives to have a look at page 25 of the Strategic Intelligence Assessment where they will see that despite seeing a significant increase, we also have the lowest numbers in Oxfordshire. This represents 84 recorded victims of rape. When you look at Office for National Statistics data, rape accounted for 36% of recorded sexual offences (nationally) in the year ending March 2022, it also highlighted that around 14% of Crime Survey for England and Wales respondents had experienced rape.</p> <p>As I explained in the meeting, sexual assault, rape and domestic abuse are just some of the types of hidden harm, which are likely to be underreported. Many victims do not come forward to</p>

		<p>disclose to police or to seek support from other agencies. As a Community Safety Partnership, we have always been focused on trying to raise awareness of how and where to access support. Violence Against Women and Girls is a priority for the Community Safety Partnership and we are currently working with police, public health and a wide range of other professionals to identify the work currently going on locally and countywide, as well as the opportunities to increase awareness of support services and how to access them. I would also recommend that Executives take a look at Thames Valley Police Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2023/2025.</p> <p>With regards to Violence Against the Person offences, Thames Valley Police are currently undergoing a Force Review and there is an imminent restructure of their services, with the aim of increasing the capacity of Neighbourhood Policing Teams to spend more time in communities. Locally, the Neighbourhood Team have focused on ensuring regular police foot patrol in towns and communities, and this is reviewed</p>
--	--	--

			<p>on a fortnightly basis, identifying hotspot areas where violent crime takes place. Thames Valley Police have recently introduced an app for police officers to easily identify where they should patrol based on crime trends and data.</p> <p>Thames Valley Police are part of a Pilot to apply to the Courts to issue Serious Violence Protection Orders to deter offenders from carrying weapons, for more information please click here. You can also find information about the work of Thames Valley Violence Reduction Partnership here, and I can confirm that the Community Safety Partnership are actively involved in the shaping of that service which actively seeks to reduce the most serious violent crimes.</p> <p>I understand that on 4 June 2024, the Chief Constable and Police & Crime Commissioner will be giving their annual address to West Oxfordshire District Council and that may be the perfect opportunity to learn more about their priorities and the Force Review.</p>
--	--	--	--

29 February	There was an additional question around funding and what the costs of reaching climate neutrality would be if no external funding was obtained. Officers explained that it would be very difficult to achieve that objective without any funding streams and exact deficit figures could be provided outside of the meeting. Action Point: Officers would provide deficit figures to Members.	Hannah Kenyon Lily Paulson	Chased on 20/03/24
-------------	---	-------------------------------	--------------------