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Date 18 November 2008

Dear Sir

PARTIAL REVIEW OF SOUTH EAST PLAN – GYPSIES, TRAVELLERS AND TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLE

I am responding on behalf of the Borough Council to the consultation on the issues and options for the Partial Review of the South East Plan dealing with Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. I deal specifically with the questions relating to pitch distribution, Transit Sites and Travelling Showpeople.

Pitch Distribution Options

My Council supports none of the four options put forward in the consultation document. However, it does see a strong case for some of the pitch requirements in Kent to be redistributed elsewhere in the region to ensure a more equitable distribution and avoid over-concentration in those areas where the historic level of provision has been high.

It therefore supports the principle of Option C, which seeks to redistribute 50% of requirements across the region, but believes that this redistribution should use Option A as a starting point rather than Option B. There are three main reasons for this. Firstly, this would give greater weight to local need (Option B is not a needs-based distribution). Secondly, in the case of Kent, we believe that the Option B district-based distribution is fundamentally flawed for the reasons set out in my letter to you dated 17 October 2007 (copy attached). Finally, Option B has not been consistently defined or generated throughout the region which means you are not comparing like-with-like.

This variation on Option C would, therefore, be my Council's preferred approach, failing which the Council would support Option C as published rather than any of the other options.



Policy & Conservation is a Division of Planning, Transport & Leisure Services
Director of Planning, Transport & Leisure Services: Steve Humphrey MRTPI
Chief Planner (Policy): Brian Gates BSc DipTP MRTPI



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Transit Site Provision

My Council agrees that Transit Site provision should be a matter for local determination in consultation with the Gypsy and Traveller community.

Travelling Showpeople

My Council believes that the matter of homeless Travelling Showpeople should be referred back to SEERA and the Guild of Travelling Showpeople. It does not believe that a distribution of single pitches widely across the region is a credible solution when Travelling Showpeople normally travel and settle in groups rather than individually. In our view there needs to be a much better understanding of the specific needs of this particular group of homeless people.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "B. R. Gates". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Brian Gates
Chief Planner (Policy)