

North West Plan Partial Review

Gypsy and Traveller Dialogue Meeting Notes

Date 17th March 2009
 Sub Region Lancashire
 Venue Burnley Football Club

Agenda for the day

Welcome and context
 The allocations (How and Why)
 The numbers
 Next steps
 Feedback

The Allocations

	GTAA	Interim Draft		1 st Draft	
		Permanent	Transit	Permanent	Transit
Blackburn inc Darwen	69 - 83	60	5	45	5
Hyndburn	30 - 33	45	5	45	5
Burnley	6 - 7	20	5	15	5
Pendle	2	15	5	10	5
Blackpool	24	10	5	10	5
Fylde	1	10	5	10	5
Wyre	0	10	5	10	5
Lancaster	29 - 30	45	5	30	5
Chorley	0	10	5	10	5
Preston	8 - 21	45	5	20	5
South Ribble	0	10	5	10	5
Ribble Valley	6	10	5	10	5
Rossendale	0	10	5	10	5
West Lancs	17	20	5	20	5

Comment [d1]: These figures differ from what we have on our spreadsheet here but I know Michael said there were some discrepancies that came to light in which version of the Lancashire GTAA we had – I will highlight this in the covering email for Michael to pick up.

Comment [d2]: As comment above for Hyndburn

Points noted about the context

- Gypsies and Irish Travellers are protected under Race Relations legislation from discrimination
- An 'ideal site' is 10 to 15 pitches

Points noted about the process

- LAs can influence the figure – this is the purpose of the consultation stage.



Issues Raised

The figures

- How has the 'hidden need' figure been worked out?
- How does the distribution achieve the stated aim of equal distribution?
The distribution is equitable not equal. Certain areas will not be used for cultural or business reasons, and district boundaries are imaginary lines that mean little to the people on the ground. LAs can work with neighbouring authorities to redistribute the figures.
- How are the numbers of transit pitches arrived at and how do we know that there is demand in all areas?
5 is the lowest number for a viable site. There should be a distinction between year round transit sites and temporary transit sites for events (e.g. for Appleby Horse Fair). Transit sites required for holidays, weddings, family visits etc could be arranged in advance. Gypsy & Travellers Northern Network, the Police or the Travellers education service could be contacted with regards to projected movements.
- Can we have one figure to cover the whole period, rather than a change beyond 2016?
This reflects EIP panel reports and natural population growth within G & T community. The GTAA's only go as far as 2016 in their current form and the draft policy does recognise the need to update GTAA studies in due course.
- How are Gypsies and Travellers on their own land been accounted for?
A combination of private and public provision is included within the figures. In some areas no allocation will be necessary as planning applications will come forward. As suitable land is often not used due to difficulties in getting required planning permission, the council might be able to consider assembling land to sell to Gypsies and Travellers who wish to run a privately owned site.

The future

- If allocations are met will this stop "illegal" sites?
If already settled, it may be difficult to persuade Gypsies & Travellers to move onto LA sites. There could also be issues with unauthorised encampments adjacent to LA sites due to the need to cater for different Gypsy & Traveller communities.
- How will support services be coordinated?
Best practice will be applied to design and work in partnership with local health and education services.
- Why would Gypsies and Travellers not want to live within the settled community?
They are very diverse communities with different needs and there is a fear of the loss of cultural identity as well as practical issues, e.g. racism.
- Do LA's have to provide services as well as land?
There will be a need to work with other agencies e.g. NHS.
- How will the provision work for different Gypsy and Traveller communities?
- How can LA's make contact with Gypsies and Travellers?
- Local authorities could contact the various network representatives.
- How to deal with the subsequent press

It is important to speak to the press, to be helpful and share reports and information. Do recorded not live radio interviews.

The process

- What is the explanation for the changes between the 1st draft and the interim draft?
After feedback online and stakeholder workshops with Gypsies & Travellers there were concerns that under counting was evident when compared to the GTAA's results; reasons for this included an undercount where multiple families were living as one unit and G & Ts living on conventional caravan parks not wishing to be identified and therefore risk eviction. This led to a suggested initial 70% increase in need on existing sites due to hidden households, which was subsequently moderated by considering all the responses received as a result of consultation in November 2008. There was concern about the lack of evidence and how this could be justified to members.
- How do housing restrictions apply?
This is a fraction of overall housing figures and there should be enough land to meet demand. There were concerns that accusations of institutionalised racism could arise if Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs were not being addressed.
- What is the statutory duty and what has been done to enforce it?
The statutory duty is set out in various places including the housing, planning and race relations legislation, so there are statutory responsibilities to comply. The Regional Planning Body can identify that Local Authority core strategies and other development plan documents are not in general conformity with RSS if policy areas are not addressed. Moreover, the Secretary of State has the power to direct LA's.
- More explanation of spatial principles and more explicit information as to how the policy is delivered
The spatial distribution takes into account the RSS spatial framework and reflects aspects of the real world and geographical constraints.
- Do we need more evidence with regards to geographical preferences of Gypsies and travellers?
The evidence base is not perfect; however the July deadline must still be met. The evidence used to support change must be publicly available to be admissible.
- How has the methodology been applied subsequently to the GTAA?
- Do we need a new GTAA if this one is flawed?

. Next Steps

- Consultation until 27th March 2009
- Taken to members early June 2009
- Regional leaders' forum to be held on 10th July 2009 (3 representatives from each region)
- Submission to Secretary of State
- 12 weeks of public consultation in summer 2009



- EIP in spring 2010 followed by Panel Report Proposed Changes and then Final Publication by Secretary of State at end of 2010

Actions from the meeting

For 4NW and the consultation team

- 4NW to develop technical note to outline what evidence has been used to support the changes in the numbers
- 4NW to include some information on the assumptions used in the process of redistributing the figures
- Revised figures will be produced at the end of the consultation process, based on what people say in this process
- Note of this meeting will be produced by CAG Consultants

For local authorities

- 4NW need formal responses on the figures on what the districts are 'comfortable with' by 27th March 2009