

Request for Special Meeting of Council in relation to Cabinet decision E2400: Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople Site Allocations Plan Preferred Options consultation.

Request:

We request the Chair of Council to convene a Special Meeting of Council in order for Council to have the opportunity to debate the Cabinet Decision of 9 May 2012; Decision E2400: Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople Site Allocations Plan Preferred Options consultation and related matters including, but not limited to, the resolution of the Planning Development & Environment Committee Policy Development & Scrutiny Committee passed at its meeting of 15 May 2012.

Rationale:

Council should have the opportunity to consider this matter for the following reasons:

- The Cabinet's decision to proceed with the options consultation despite the express wish of the Planning, Transport and Environment PD&S Panel that the Cabinet postpone the consultation until it has conducted an updated needs assessment and reconsidered the suitability of the various sites listed in the report in the light of comments made by the Panel.

It is also of serious concern that the Cabinet should not respond directly to the Chair of the PD&S Panel on a decision made by such an important Council committee having heard many representations from various communities in B&NES but should rather announce the decision to proceed with consultation by a comment to local newspapers.

- In the light of serious concerns raised over the Council's consultation to date and its site selection process, Council should have the opportunity to discuss these concerns and recommend an appropriate way forward for Cabinet.
- Council should consider whether the Council should undertake a new Needs Assessment of Gypsy and Traveller site provision in the light of recently published Government guidelines on the allocation of Gypsy and Traveller sites and as a significant element of the Council's Draft Core Strategy process.

This is a matter for Council, and not Cabinet, as it forms part of the evidence base for the Core Strategy, and particularly having regard to the resolution of the PD&S Panel.

Given that the Council is currently due to commence its consultation on the 23 May 2012, we believe this issue should be considered by Council as a matter of urgency and so request the meeting be held within two weeks of this request being submitted.

Requested by:

Councillors Francine Haeberling, Malcolm Hanney, Vic Pritchard, Peter Edwards and Marie Longstaff