

July 10, 2013

I have made so many representations to this Cabinet that I feel I don't have to introduce myself or my subject.

Unfortunately the lack of progress with the Gypsy and Traveller DPD, the very slow and fragmented response to questions and the inconsistency of action, brings me and one of my colleagues here again.

You will all recall the serious and detailed representations made and questions asked by the Group during the last 3 months and unfortunately the answers to some of the questions asked arrived by post from your Divisional Director of Planning and Transport only yesterday. We realize that your officers have a demanding work load but this very late arrival of answers is, unfortunately indicative of the very late arrival and from my observation, lack lustre performance that has been consistent through this process.

I would like to say that the wait has been worth it and your officers' response has been both comprehensive and convincing. Unfortunately, the answers in the majority fail to adequately explain and appear in general to be seeking to avoid the clear thrust of the questions.

Given the late arrival of the answers we feel it is best to structure a detailed response which will inevitably use more time that we have here this evening. If you are willing, will it be acceptable for our response to be circulated to the Cabinet members and can we ask that you advise officers to respond within 21 days please?

The major planning application on the Old Colliery site in Stanton Drew has been further amended, this time with an extension of the consultation period. As you will imagine the application remains full of errors and misleading statements. Can we ask the Cabinet to maintain sight of this particular application and your officers handling as it makes its way towards the Planning Committee? We must all make sure that the application is handled with the utmost diligence, care and attention.

Can we ask that the Cabinet ensures that you are aware and so are your officers, to the emerging further guidance from Westminster on prohibition of siting of Gypsy and Traveller sites in the Green Belt and, the momentum of opinion and debate in Westminster regarding the need to avoid large Gypsy and Traveller settlements and the creation of ghettos.

Can we ask that you maintain an active interest in the progress of the DPD and the provision of pitches at Lower Bristol Road and further, you quickly and positively respond to any requests of your officers for further support in manpower or facilities. We have noted your public support for the Divisional Director and your planning officers and this is laudable but, credit should be given when deserved for the particular achievement quoted. We don't think there can be any medals on this particular task.

Continued overleaf

Clarke Osborne Statement - Cabinet Meeting

July 10, 2013

We want this Council to prove the doubters wrong, to dispel the rumours of friendly deals and undisclosed links and we want to support the Core Strategy. We just need to see a real enthusiasm to provide information and be convinced that you value your rural communities and want to make their neighbourhoods a better place to live and work.