

<b>ENVIRONMENT CAPITAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>	<b>Agenda Item No. 7</b>
<b>9 SEPTEMBER 2010</b>	<b>Public Report</b>

## **Report of the Executive Director of Operations**

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### **NORWOOD LANE AND THE PASTON TRAVELLERS SITE**

#### **1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1 At a meeting of the Gunthorpe, Paston, Walton and Werrington Community Committee held on 23 June 2010 at the Honeyhill Centre in Paston, the Community Committee requested that a report highlighting the issues relating to fly tipping at Norwood Lane and the Paston Travellers Site, including suggested solutions to the issue, be brought to the Scrutiny Committee. This is to enable Members to gain a better understanding of the background and context to this ongoing challenge, and to scrutinise the recommended actions.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That the Committee support the proposed actions outlined within this report to rectify the issues relating to Norwood Lane and the Paston Travellers Site.

#### **3. LINKS TO THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT**

- 3.1 The issues surrounding the Norwood Lane site impact across the whole Sustainable Community Strategy, but most specifically have serious environmental, social and cohesion implications.

#### **4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 The Paston Travellers Site (situated off Norwood Lane) is accessed via Newborough Road. The access road is very long and for over 15 years has been a hotspot for fly tipping. The fly tipping is a mixture of household and business waste, often with dangerous material included such as asbestos.

There has been a significant increase in the number of fly tipping incidents in the past year with the following consequences:

- Limited access for emergency vehicles accessing the site
- Residents being unable to leave or enter the site
- Attendance of the fire service on numerous occasions due to burning of rubbish
- Residents reporting toxic fumes
- Damage to vehicles entering and exiting the site

The site is cleared regularly by colleagues in City Services, with significant annual costs.

## 5. KEY ISSUES

5.1 Significant increase in fly tipping on the site over the past 12 months has resulted in:

- national media coverage, usually negative
- Increased illegal activity on the site
- Emergency services unable to access the site in an emergency or for appointments
- Increased complaints from neighbours living in the surrounding area

Health and safety risks:

- For residents in proximity to the site from toxic gases where onsite fly tipping has occurred
- Children playing in very dangerous conditions including being surrounded by glass and metal
- Site is at risk of flooding during heavy downpour due to blocked drains
- No fire points or access on the site leaving the Travellers vulnerable to fire hazards

Resulting in community cohesion issues including:

- Council staff and other colleagues having concerns and fears accessing the site resulting in a risk of the community not receiving fair and accessible services
- Increased community tension between the resident Traveller population and surrounding non-Traveller community.

5.2 There are currently no mechanisms in place to catch fly tippers and identify the perpetrators. From intelligence, it is known that whilst some fly tipping is being carried out by a few individuals from the site, the majority is put there by businesses and members of the general public.

5.3 Travellers living on the site are fearful to report individuals and have been verbally and physically attacked on previous occasions when they have tried to approach fly tippers.

5.4 **Current solutions being undertaken:**

- A Solution Clinic has been set up which will bring partners together from all related agencies, national and regional expertise in working with the Traveller community and members of the Traveller Community, to address the issues at Paston Travellers Site. The aims of the Solution Clinic are to improve environmental and community safety issues at Paston, whilst also building community relations with the Gypsy and Traveller community living on the site.
- Closer working relationships with representatives from the community on the Paston Travellers site over the last few months to develop a solution for dealing with the ongoing issues of flytipping and other matters.
- We have carried out investigations into inserting a bund to restrict the width of the road thus restricting the opportunity to flytip waste along the lane. Other alternatives have also been looked into including the possibility of having a permanently placed overt CCTV camera. This could be used when necessary to identify offenders and bring about prosecutions when offences occur as well as acting as an ongoing deterrent.

5.5 More recently, we have committed, with the agreement of representatives from the Travellers site, to undertake a programme of events in the next 3-6 months. This will include intelligence gathering through the use of covert CCTV operations and joint patrols with the local Police Rural Community Action Team (RCAT). These patrols will conduct stop checks on vehicles and drivers transporting waste in the local area ensuring licences and paperwork for waste disposal are up to date and in order. All this is to be followed up with positive action where evidence and circumstance allow, including issuing Fixed Penalty Notices to illegal waste transporters and prosecution cases brought against those found to have Flytipped in the area.

Our intention is to find the perpetrators of these offences, take enforcement action against them and promote the message that this area will no longer tolerate flytipping.

- 5.6 We have looked into changing the layout of the road, but the costs involved would be in the region of £65k and we have been informed that this would not guarantee the cessation of flytipping in the area.

## **6. IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 If no action is taken to reduce / stop the fly tipping activities, the Council and its partners will continue to incur significant costs each year in connection with this site as in the last two financial years significant costs have already been incurred.
- 6.2 The Gypsy and Traveller Community has been identified as a 2010/2011 priority in the Peterborough Cohesion Strategy. In addressing the issues which are highlighted in this report, we can ensure that residents who currently live on the Paston site have the same quality and standard of living as other residents in Peterborough.

## **7. CONSULTATION**

- 7.1 A meeting has been held with residents from the site and PCC staff to address the issues on the Paston Travellers Site. The Travellers felt that while there were significant issues for the Site generally, they were only keen at this stage to have the road clearance addressed before any other actions were taken relating to the site.

## **8. NEXT STEPS**

- 8.1 A meeting was held on 1 August with City Services to ascertain how the PCC CCTV equipment could be installed and monitored by the Neighbourhoods Department in partnership with the Police.
- 8.2 Solution Centre Clinic to be held on 6 September.

## **9. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

- 9.1 None.

## **10. APPENDICES**

- 10.1 Newspaper Article – Evening Telegraph - May 11 2010

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