



Unauthorised Gypsy & Traveller Encampments - Addendum Report

Report of the Service Director, Community Protection and Well-being

There are two City Council policies that relate to the management and enforcement of unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller encampments:

- “Leicester City Council Enforcement Policy for Dealing with Unauthorised Encampments”, approved by the Council’s former Environment Committee on 9th June 1999.
- A Joint Agreement and enforcement policy for managing unauthorised encampments in Leicestershire and Rutland (together with a Code of Practice for Travellers in Leicestershire, Leicester City and Rutland) approved by the Council’s former Environment Committee on 7th June 2000.

The 1999 policy incorporates a number of detailed procedural requirements that officers have to follow in dealing with unauthorised encampments. Some of these requirements are fairly prescriptive and can sometimes prevent the expedient handling of unauthorised encampments. In particular, the requirement to consult with external agencies can, in certain circumstances, be a cause for delay.

The Joint Agreement approved in 2000 was a policy document agreed by Leicester City Council, all other local authorities in Leicestershire and Rutland (apart from North West Leicestershire District Council) and the Leicestershire Constabulary. This agreement is far less prescriptive in terms of its procedural requirements.

In order to allow unauthorised encampments to be dealt with more expediently, Cabinet may wish to consider varying the 1999 policy with immediate effect. Whilst not removing the requirement to notify all relevant agencies, the policy could be varied so as to allow officers to conduct more expedient welfare enquiries, in appropriate circumstances.

Additional Recommendations:

1. That the Enforcement Policy for Dealing with Unauthorised Encampments, approved by the Council’s former Environment Committee on 9th June 1999, is varied to authorise the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Culture to conduct more expedient welfare enquiries in circumstances where the procedures set out in that policy would result in an unacceptable delay.
2. That Corporate Director of Regeneration and Culture, is authorised to develop and implement, in consultation with the Cabinet Link for Regeneration and Culture, revised procedural guidelines for undertaking expedient welfare enquiries in relation to unauthorised encampments.

Legal Implications

This addendum report has been prepared in consultation with Anthony Cross, Assistant Head of Legal Services.