



CABINET 2 OCTOBER 2002

TRISTAN CLOSE AND TOP CAMP CALSHOT - SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE FOR REMEDIAL WORKS

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report sets out the background to recent Traveller problems experienced on land owned by the District Council at Calshot and seeks Members approval for supplementary budgetary provision for remedial and clear up works following the travellers eviction.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In recent weeks the Council's Housing Estate at Tristan Close, Calshot and adjoining surplus, vacant land at Top Camp has been occupied by various gypsy and traveller families.

Following the District obtaining a Court Order and Injunction the two groups vacated their encampments between the 18th and 22nd July.

Although the vehicles and caravans belonging to the groups left without incident a significant amount of rubbish, burnt out vehicles, debris from landscape clearance works undertaken by the travellers remained.

Although measures are frequently put in place to maintain the security of both sites including the construction of a perimeter ditch, earth bund, fencing and gates at the entrance to Top Camp these measures were breached in a number of places and urgent remedial work to make the sites secure was necessary. The land at Top Camp immediately adjacent to the Tristan Close Estate has been a regular area for fly-tipping and although recently cleared has again been used for the illegal dumping of garden waste, fridges and building rubble and other spoil.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The unprecedented scale of the clear up and remedial works required on this occasion exceeds the budget and Officers seek Members approval for additional budgetary provision for this work. Although the two sites are the responsibility of Housing and Corporate and Finance Portfolio Holders, as the works were required as a matter of urgency Contractors were appointed to deal with Top Camp and Tristan Close together. Officers recommended that the cost of the works should be shared on an equal basis between Portfolio's rather than ask the Contractor to apportion his time and labour between the two sites. The total bill for the clear up is estimated to be in the region of £16,000. With regard to the element of expenditure incurred in relation to the Housing land these can be contained within existing budgets however approximately an additional £8,000 will be required for the Corporate and Finance Portfolio element of the works.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 As with any incursion of this nature there are potentially seriously environmental issues arising from the use of the site for human habitation where adequate sanitary provisions are not existent. The amount and nature of the refuse left behind following the vacation of the site could potentially create a vermin and pest problem thus requiring immediate attention.

5. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 During the period of time in which the sites were occupied fires were started amongst the waste on a number of occasions, which again required removal at the earliest opportunity.

A proportion of the costs incurred in carrying out the remedial works are for the re-establishment of the security provision, re-erecting fences and gates where damaged and re-digging the security ditch and reconstruction of the earth mound around the playing field at Tristan Close.

6. PORTFOLIO HOLDERS COMMENTS

6.1 The Portfolio holder is Cllr C Wise and advised "Having visited Top Camp and seen the mess left by the "Travellers" I have no option but to support this request. The alternative would be to leave burned out vehicles, refuse and waste lying around which in my view would result in the area being turned into a permanent tipping site."

7. CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Although this is not the first occasion where travellers and gypsy families have occupied Council land it is probably the most significant in terms of numbers and remedial action required. Until such time as local authorities and landowners are given increased powers to effect immediate removal of such persons it is likely that additional future resources will need to be made available for remedial works.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 It is recommended that a supplementary estimate of £8,000 as identified above be agreed for the remedial works as outlined in this report.

Further Information:

Estate Management Issues
Andrew Groom, Valuer
Tel (023) 8028 5634
E-mail andy.groom@nfdc.gov.uk

Background Papers

None