

Report on	NIHE – Traveller Provision
Reporting Officer	Mark Kelso
Contact Officer	

Is this report restricted for confidential business? If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	Yes	
	No	X

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To update Members on the meetings with NIHE personnel in relation to the Travelling Community at the Creagh Industrial site and progress site assessment .
2.0	Background
2.1	Members will be aware from previous Committee reports that a number of traveller families have taken up residence at the Creagh Industrial site , Toomebridge . The travellers have been resident in and around this locality for over three years .. They temporarily relocated to a Council owned carpark facility at Ballyronan for a short period before being requested to move off the site .
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>The Northern Ireland Housing Executive have statutory responsibility for assessing and determining the needs and provision of temporary and permanent 'halting' sites for travellers under the Housing (NI) Order 1981 – Article 28. Under this legislation the Executive have a 'duty' to provide caravan site facilities where this is deemed appropriate . This duty takes effect when a Needs Assessment confirms that traveller accommodation is required .</p> <p>Following consideration of the matter at the December meeting of Committee , correspondence was forwarded to the NIHE Manager advising of the Councils support in the matter and referenced potential sites at Hillhead Road , Toomebridge and Ballyronan for further assessment for traveller provision .</p> <p>Council officers met with NIHE representatives on two occasions over the summer period on Friday 9 June and Thursday 27 July . NIHE personnel advised they had commenced an assessment of available sites through their Mid Ulster social housing land bank to determine their potential suitability as a traveller transit facility .</p> <p>Initial findings however have indicated that all off their sites are within or close to existing settlement limits and as such are not suitable as potential transit sites .</p> <p>NIHE also confirmed they were actively seeking to engage with the Creagh Traveller group in regards to assessment of need, though this had proved difficult</p>

3.2	<p>up to that point . In the course of discussions NIHE indicated they would wish to work closely with Council to progress the identification and acquisition of an appropriate site and that any assistance that could be offered would be welcomed.</p> <p>Site Assessment</p> <p>In consideration of potential site provision , there are a number of specific criteria that must be achieved in accordance with design guidance , including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of adequate landscaping to the proposed development/site; • Compatible development with existing and proposed buildings and structures in the local area paying particular regard to environmental amenity; • Where relevant, provision of workspace, play space and visitor parking. <p>The location and assessment of a single family traveller serviced site and /or transit site requires early engagement with the Planning section to ensure all relevant matters are duly considered in site identification and assessment .</p> <p>Given the ongoing issues in and around the existing encampment at the Creagh , and the need to progress this matter . It is proposed to engage a Design Team to work closely with NIHE and Planning to undertake a scoping exercise . This would be used to identify potential sites within the South Derry locality that meet the relevant NIHE criteria for transit site provision and are suitable for development , so as to enable this work to be progressed .</p>
4	Other Considerations
4.1	<p><u>Financial & Human Resources Implications</u></p> <p>Financial: Estimated Fee Element less than £ 5000</p>
4.2	<p><u>Equality and Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>As identified</p>
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	<p>That Members agree appointment of a design team to assist NIHE with the assessment and identification of appropriate sites for transit traveller provision .</p>