

Agenda Item	14d
Report No	CIA/13/20

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: City of Inverness Area Committee

Date: 20 February 2020

Report Title: Gypsy Travelling People site

Report By: David Haas, Inverness City and Area Manager

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Gypsy Travelling Peoples site adjacent to Stadium Road (Appendix 1) is on the Inverness Common Good Fund account and managed by the Council's Housing Service.
- 1.2 The Housing Service pay an annual rent of £6,000 to Inverness Common Good Fund for the Gypsy Travelling Peoples site.
- 1.3 It's perimeter, alongside Stadium Road and the salt depot, has accumulated considerable debris and vegetation that requires to be cleared.
- 1.4 The site will be cleared of debris and existing vegetation and have a layer of hard core applied to create hard standing.
- 1.5 The Council's Housing Service will ensure the area of hard standing is maintained in good order.
- 1.6 The maintenance regimen will be included in the duties of the Site Manager with a negligible additional revenue cost to the Housing Service.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
 - i. Approve expenditure of £61,846 to clear the area of debris and vegetation and to provide a weed suppressant geotextile covered with a hardcore surface.

3. Implications

- 3.1 Resource – the resource requirement is as stated in this report
- 3.2 Legal – there are currently no legal implications
- 3.3 Community (Equality, Poverty, Rural and Island) – improved outcomes for Gypsy Travelling People resident at the permanent site
- 3.4 Climate Change / Carbon Clever – no implications
- 3.5 Risk – no implications
- 3.6 Gaelic – no implications

4. Current situation

- 4.1 The perimeter of the Gypsy Travelling People's site on two sides (Appendix 2) has accumulations of debris the origins of which are uncertain, which has become overgrown with vegetation.
- 4.2 The debris appears to be from fly-tipping and the rogue vegetation growth is not only unsightly, but it also allows nesting areas for rats and other vermin from the nearby landfill site.
- 4.3 The Council does carry out regular pest control on the site, but this is insufficient to eradicate the presence of vermin because of the overgrown vegetation.
- 4.4 It is considered that this accumulation of debris is detrimental to the amenity of the residents in the Gypsy Travelling People's site with a potential associated negative health impact.
- 4.5 Given the nature of this area with considerable vegetation it is difficult to monitor and maintain it in good order.

5. Proposed actions

- 5.1 Ground clearance will be undertaken by a contractor with the debris and vegetation removed from the site and disposed of.
- 5.2 This will be at a cost of £35,000
- 5.3 The proposal is to clear the site and to level it in readiness for laying a weed suppressant geotextile barrier to be covered with a hardcore surface that will make it easier to maintain and manage.
- 5.4 The cost to provide the weed suppressant and hardcore surface will be £26,846
- 5.5 The environmental impact of removing this type of vegetation is minimal, but there will be a significant positive impact when all the rubbish underneath is removed and disposed of appropriately.
- 5.6 The site will then be monitored and maintained on behalf of the Council's Housing Service by the Site Manager. They will notify the City Manager of any issues.

5.7 The total cost of remediating the site will be £61,846

6. Benefit

6.1 The benefit of carrying out this work will be to improve the environment adjacent to the Gypsy Travelling People's site and make it more practical to monitor and maintain.

6.2 This will prevent, to unacceptable levels, the accumulation of debris into the future.

6.3 It will contribute to improved outcomes for the Gypsy Travelling People who reside at this permanent site.

Designation: Inverness City and Area Manager

Date: 23rd January 2020

Author: Charles Stephen, Ward Manager
Background Papers:

Appendix 1



Appendix 2

