

Report to: Communities Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 9th July 2015

Lead Member/Officers: Lead Member for Public Realm/
Head of Business Improvement and Modernisation &
Head of Planning and Public Protection

Report Author: Graduate Trainee: Business Improvement and
Modernisation

Title: Better Regulation of Caravan Sites Project Update

1. What is the report about?

This report is a follow up from the one presented to Communities Scrutiny Committee in April 2015. It will outline the work carried out to date and planned next steps by the Business Improvement and Modernisation Service along with providing an update on the Planning and Public Protection element of the project.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

To provide information regarding progress on this project since responsibility for data sourcing was assigned to the Business Improvement and Modernisation Service.

3. What are the Recommendations?

That the Committee comments on the project progress to date and agrees on the planned next steps.

4. Report details

Background

Following the pilot project within Planning and Public Protection, which resulted in the production of the Records, Regulation and Repercussions options appraisal paper, responsibility for the corporate aspects of the project were transferred to Business Improvement and Modernisation.

Planning and Public Protection were however tasked with continuing with the production of a regulatory procedure. This procedure will detail the regulatory options for managing the unauthorised residential use of holiday caravans from the planning and licensing perspectives.

Although some of the project milestones will be achieved by different services this will be run as a single project.

Progress to Date

Initial investigations by the project team identified that there was an issue in relation to a lack of a comprehensive list of all holiday caravan site (and individual holiday caravan) addresses in the county (see section 2 of Appendix 1). It was established that the development of a comprehensive list of caravan addresses would enable services, at the point of customer contact, to identify holiday caravan occupants and establish the appropriate action, i.e. whether or not the customer is eligible for the service. As such we will be able to quickly reduce the allocation of services to those who are not eligible. Furthermore, as services more accurately record caravan site address information from customers then this will enable the production of more reliable reports on service use in the future.

Therefore the project group decided that the development of this list (including both the site addresses and individual holiday caravan addresses) should be one of the key project milestones. It was agreed that the individual caravan addresses should be inputted into the LLPG (Local Land and Property Gazetteer).

Although the inputting of individual holiday caravan address data will be beneficial in the long term, the process of gathering and inputting the data itself may also take some time. A significant amount of time and planning will be required in terms of developing open communication channels with site owners for example. Site owners will need to understand the aims of the project and will need to be engaged in order to facilitate information sharing in relation to individual caravan addresses.

Furthermore, due to the interdependencies that exist between this project and the Digital Choice and the Data Management Solution projects at the current time not all services will immediately have access to the address information (see section 2.1 of Appendix 1). As such the project team identified a temporary solution through the development of guidance for caravan address data entry and service eligibility along with a caravan site information record (see Product Descriptions in Appendix 2).

Along with the production of the comprehensive caravan address list, a further five key milestones have also been identified for the project including:

- Undertake mapping of holiday caravan site locations and allowances (planning and licensing) (see Appendix 3)
- Develop a data processing system which enables reporting on service use by holiday caravan 'residents' (see Appendix 4 for data collected to date). This appendix is exempt from public disclosure as per paragraph 13 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972)
- Undertake analysis and mapping of service use results
- Produce a corporate caravan strategy
- Development of a regulatory procedure and implementation plan

Our progress towards achieving these milestones can be seen in section 3 of Appendix 1.

Next Steps

The project we will be focusing on the following milestones in the next 4 months:

- Continued development of the comprehensive caravan site address list
- Development of the data processing system
- Production of caravan address data inputting and eligibility guidance documents

For more information please see section 4 of Appendix 1.

It is hoped that all milestones for the project will be achieved, and all primary products produced, by the end of 2015.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

Controlling the way caravan parks are used contributes towards the following council priorities:

- Developing the local economy
- Vulnerable people are protected and are able to live as independently as possible
- Ensuring access to good quality housing
- Modernising the Council to deliver efficiencies and improve service for our customer

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

The project is not considered to require any additional staffing or finance resource at this stage.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken on the decision? The completed EqIA template should be attached as an appendix to the report.

An initial equality impact assessment has been completed for this project which identifies race (specifically gypsies and travellers), age and disability to be the primary protected characteristics likely to be affected (see Appendix 5). However this is considered to be a dynamic document which will continue to be reviewed as the project develops.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

Communities Scrutiny Committee has been consulted throughout the development of this project.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

N/A

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

A number of risks have been identified for the project which can be seen in the Business Case in Appendix 6. There are however no perceived risks associated with the recommendations in this report.

11. Power to make the Decision

Local Government Act 2000. Article 6.3.3 of the Council's Constitution outlines scrutiny's powers with respect to policy development and review.

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