

GREATER **LONDON** AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2277

Title: London Gypsies and Travellers - Negotiated Stopping Research

Executive Summary:

The Mayor is committed to providing homes in London that meet the diverse housing needs of Londoners and this includes working to ensure the accommodation needs of the Gypsy and Traveller community are met. This decision form seeks the approval of funding to conduct research to support the development of a proposal for introducing negotiated stopping in London, which should help to manage unauthorised developments and encampments in the capital.

Decision:

That the Assistant Director - Housing approves:

Expenditure of up to £30,000 to fund research by London Gypsies and Travellers and De Montfort University to develop a proposal for introducing negotiated stopping in London.

AUTHORISING ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/HEAD OF UNIT

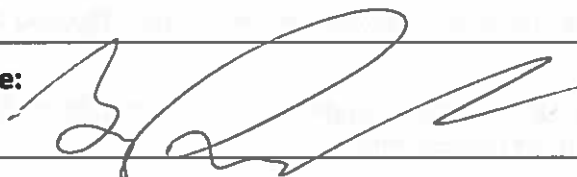
I have reviewed the request and am satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor's plans and priorities.

It has my approval.

Name: Jamie Ratcliff

Position: Assistant Director - Housing

Signature:



Date:

8/10/18

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. The London Housing Strategy encourages councils to actively plan for the accommodation requirements of London's Gypsy and Traveller community, both through the development of permanent sites and the refurbishment of existing sites. The Mayor is providing grant funding through his Affordable Homes Programme to support the remodelling of sites or the building of new sites.
- 1.2. The draft London Plan sets out how boroughs should plan to meet the identified need for permanent Gypsy and Traveller pitches, by carrying out needs assessments based on a new definition of Gypsies and Travellers and addressing issues identified when audits are undertaken of existing pitches and sites.
- 1.3. Unauthorised developments and encampments can often be a result of the lack of permanent sites and pitches for the Gypsy and Traveller community to live on. The repeal of the 1968 Caravan Sites Act in 1994 resulted in local authorities no longer being required to build council sites, and this change led to a reduction in the number of pitches in the capital.
- 1.4. GLA officers have been working with London Gypsies and Travellers to identify how a negotiated stopping approach could be implemented in London, as a way of minimising the occurrences of unauthorised encampments and the resultant negative impacts that these can have on Gypsy and Traveller communities and local residents. This would build on the approach developed by Leeds Gypsy and Traveller Exchange (GATE), which has been found to save the local authority and police up to £230,000 annually and promote community cohesion.
- 1.5. The negotiated stopping approach allows an agreement to be reached between a local authority and Gypsies and Travellers who encamp on a site that is not authorised for that purpose. The agreement outlines the terms on which they may stay on a particular piece of land for a defined time period, without being evicted by the local authority. During this agreed time the local authority provides basic temporary facilities such as rubbish disposal, skips and portaloos. Negotiated stopping places do not require planning permission.
- 1.6. The research proposal, developed jointly by London Gypsies and Travellers (LGT) and De Montfort University (Appendix 1) builds upon discussions between GLA officers and LGT exploring negotiated stopping as an approach to minimise the occurrences of unauthorised developments and encampments in London. The first part of the research will involve work to understand the current context of unauthorised developments and encampments in London (i.e. who is involved in reporting and enforcing against them, who currently supports the community when they are living on the encampments and what is the experience of those living on these sites) and map out the key contacts and networks that need to be engaged in any future work in this area. This work would involve:
 - Interviewing Gypsy and Traveller families for their views on the negotiated stopping approach as part of initial research
 - Conducting desk-based research into what procedures and processes London boroughs currently have in dealing with unauthorised encampments
 - Conducting in-depth interviews with a number of local authorities to obtain an understanding of the challenges faced with unauthorised encampments at the local level
- 1.7. The second part of the research would involve developing a proposal for how to take forward negotiated stopping in London, taking into account the results of the first half of the work.

- 1.8. The research is estimated to cost £28,465. Full details are available in Appendix 1, but below is an overview of how the costs will be split between the two partners:

| Partner and activity | Cost |
|---|---------|
| London Gypsies and Travellers (Overall project management, initial interviews with gypsy and traveller families, research scoping and developing pilot proposal) | £10,800 |
| De Montfort University (Research project management, research analysis, research assistants) | £17,665 |

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1. The objectives of the research are as follows:

- To map out stakeholders and infrastructure involved in managing unauthorised encampments across London boroughs
- To understand the facilitators and barriers for implementing negotiated stopping in different contexts
- To develop relationships leading to political buy-in from local authorities for a negotiated stopping funding stream.

- 2.2. The expected outcomes of the research are as follows:

- A database of contacts across London Boroughs, Metropolitan Police Service and elected representatives involved in unauthorised encampment management
- A report outlining the findings of the research and setting out recommendations for ways forward to implement negotiated stopping in London
- Options for a London Negotiated Stopping Pilot including: scope and time frame; geographical extent; estimated costs and job descriptions for the new roles

- 2.3. Overall, the aim of the research is to understand the conditions that would make the introduction of a negotiated stopping approach successful in London. The outcome will provide a robust evidence base to support the development of the next steps for any negotiated stopping approach. Options for implementing any new approach, including funding, would need to be considered by the GLA and relevant partners.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1. There is a chronic shortage of affordable housing in London and those with protected characteristics are more likely to disproportionately suffer as a result of this shortage. The London Housing Strategy Impact Assessment acknowledges Londoners with a range of protected characteristics require specific housing needs and that the Gypsy and Traveller community can face particularly acute difficulties securing accommodation that meets their needs.
- 3.2. The Gypsy and Traveller community stand to benefit from the outcomes of this research which supports the provision of meeting their accommodation needs, encouraging London boroughs to engage with more approaches that will bring positive outcomes for Gypsies and Travellers, as well as helping to improve relations between Gypsies and Travellers and other Londoners.

4. Other considerations

a) Key risks and issues

- 4.1. The key risk associated with this decision is that the research is not delivered by London Gypsies and Travellers and De Montfort University. This risk will be mitigated through a grant agreement and robust monitoring between the GLA and London Gypsies and Travellers to ensure that appropriate progress is made, and poor performance is identified and rectified quickly. An initiation meeting will be held with London Gypsies and Travellers and De Montfort University, followed with bi-monthly meetings to update on progress. This key risk will also be managed through staged payments, whereby 80 per cent of the funding will be released at the start of the research and 20 per cent once the research is completed and a report of findings is produced.

b) Links to the mayoral strategies and priorities

- 4.2. Policy H16 of the Mayor's draft new London Plan sets out requirements for boroughs to assess and plan for the accommodation needs of the Gypsy and Traveller community
- 4.3. Policy 5.2, proposal A3 of the Mayor's London Housing Strategy states "The Mayor will work with councils, housing associations, Government and others to ensure that London's homes and neighbourhoods support London's diverse housing needs... [including] working with the Gypsy and Traveller community to ensure their housing needs are met".

c) Consultations and impact assessments

- 4.4. The expected outcomes of this work would not be subject to a formal consultation but key stakeholders, including the Gypsy and Traveller community and local authorities, would be consulted with as part of the research.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1. This decision seeks approval for expenditure of up to £30,000 to fund research to inform a pilot project on negotiated stopping as an approach to manage unauthorised developments and encampments in London.
- 5.2. The expenditure will be funded from the Housing and Land Management and Consultancy budget with approximately £22,772 (80%) to be spent in 2018/19 and £5,693 (20%) in 2019/20 financial years.

6. Planned delivery approach and next steps

| Activity | Timeline |
|---|----------------------------|
| Project initiation meeting (with bi-monthly monitoring meetings thereafter) | October 2018 |
| Interviews with Gypsy and Traveller families | October 2018 |
| Research scoping and design | November 2018 |
| Desk-based research of all London boroughs | December 2018-January 2019 |
| In depth interviews with a sample of London boroughs | February 2019-April 2019 |
| Analysis of research findings | May 2019 |
| Report of findings and final negotiated stopping proposal | June 2019 |

Appendices and supporting papers:

Appendix 1: Developing a Negotiated Stopping pilot in London - scoping research proposal

Public access to information

Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA) and will be made available on the GLA website within one working day of approval.

If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the decision (for example, to complete a procurement process), it can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary. **Note:** This form (Part 1) will either be published within one working day after it has been approved or on the defer date.

Part 1 - Deferral

Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? NO

If YES, for what reason:

Until what date: (a date is required if deferring)

Part 2 - Sensitive information

Only the facts or advice that would be exempt from disclosure under FoIA should be included in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a part 2 form - NO

ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:

Drafting officer to
confirm the
following (✓)

Drafting officer:

Temitope Moses has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms that the Finance and Legal teams have commented on this proposal as required, and this decision reflects their comments.

Corporate Investment Board

This decision was agreed by the Corporate Investment Board on 8 October 2018.

HEAD OF FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE:

I confirm that financial and legal implications have been appropriately considered in the preparation of this report.

Signature



Date

58.10.18

