
REPORT TO:	COMMUNITY SERVICES	AGENDA ITEM: 21
DATE OF MEETING:	11 TH APRIL 2002	CATEGORY: DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	CHRIS MASON 5794	DOC:
SUBJECT:	TRAVELLER ENCROACHMENT – GRESLEY COMMON	REF: e:\leisure\committee reports\travellers.doc
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	GRESLEY	TERMS OF REFERENCE:CS10

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 To approve an approach to Finance and Management Committee to fund proposals to provide a deterrent to traveller encroachment on Gresley Common

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To seek Member approval to proposals to provide a deterrent to traveller encroachment on Gresley Common.

3.0 Executive Summary

- 3.1 Over recent years, traveller encroachment on parts of Gresley Common has increased fairly dramatically. One of the major problems with the area is that, as part of the Common, it is easily accessible. To maintain access, while at the same time deterring traveller encroachment, the only practical solution would appear to be the erection of bollards around the whole site. This would cost in the region of £12,500.

4.0 Detail

- 4.1 So far this year there have been 2 incidents of encroachment on the Common. Cleaning up after the first incident cost approximately £180. However, a large number of complaints were received from local residents about the disruption caused by the behaviour of the travellers.
- 4.2 A number of options were considered to deter the travellers including tree planting and the creation of a bank and trench around the whole site. These were discounted mainly because they had been generally unsuccessfully at other sites. The most practical option appears to be the erection of barrier gates down the central roadway with timber bollards placed around the site. The plan at Annexe A identifies the location of the site together with the location of barriers and bollards.
- 4.3 It should be stressed there is no guarantee that the erection of bollards will stop travellers using the site in future. Experience at other locations has indicated that if

the travellers are determined enough they will be able to gain access. There are also other locations in the immediate area, that while they may not be as attractive and as easy to access as the frontage of Common off York Road, could provide alternative sites for the travellers.

5.0 Financial Implications

- 5.1 Incursions of this type have a number of financial implications. The first is the direct cost of cleaning the site up once the travellers have left. While this was relatively low following the last encroachment, previous incidents on other areas of Gresley Common have cost £1000 to tidy up. Traveller incursions also involve a large amount of officer time in dealing with both the legal processes involved and the public dissatisfaction. Approving this proposal will not guarantee ending this commitment as it is possible that the travellers will use other sites in the District
- 5.2 Following competitive quotations the lowest price for doing the work, as specified, is £12,500. Revenue has not been allocated in this year's budget for this project, nor can any savings be made from other budgets in this service area.
- 5.3 Under the Council's current structure only Finance and Management Committee can approve the re-allocation of funding for which a budget has not already been approved. If Members were minded to undertake the project then an approach would have to be made to the next meeting of that Committee in June 2002. Because budgets have already been set, to fund this work, at this stage, would involve the postponement of one of the schemes already approved in this year's process. A list of these 'one off' projects is included in Annexe B. If Members feel that this work can wait until next financial year then a service development proposal could be submitted for consideration as part of the 2003 / 2004 budget process

6.0 Corporate Implications

- 6.1 Applications for budgets for work that not been budgeted for need to be considered in conjunction with other demands on finance.

7.0 Community Implications

- 7.1 The provision of bollards would still allow the existing community use of the site to take place.

8.0 Conclusions

- 8.1 The encroachment of travellers on Gresley Common adjacent to Maurice Lea Memorial Park and York Road is becoming more frequent. A large number of complaints have been received from local residents requesting that action be taken to deter this encroachment. The provision of bollards around the whole site appears to be most effective way of deterring this access in future.

9.0 Background Papers

- 9.1 File 68, Technical Services.