

Date 2/9/2016

Briefing Paper

To: The Chair, Councillors and Co-opted Representatives of the Scrutiny Board

Title: Unauthorised Encampments in Wolverhampton: Update

1.0 Background

- 1.1 In common with the other local authorities in the Black Country, Wolverhampton has experienced regular unauthorised encampments by the Gypsy and Traveller community over recent years and In September 2015 a Task and Finish Group was called to look into the issue.
- 1.2 In response to this, a new joint protocol between City of Wolverhampton Council and West Midlands Police was developed during 2015/16 with the aim of improving our overall response to incursions. The revised protocol has proven to be operationally successful and there is now an on-going workstream to develop a similar protocol encompassing the whole of the Black Country.
- 1.3 When Scrutiny next met in April 2016 a request was made for a Members Guide on unauthorised encampments (**draft copy attached**) and a communications protocol. A verbal update will be presented on the importance of effective communications during a Traveller incursion.
- 1.4 Following on from the new protocol, in April 2016 a presentation was made to Senior Executive Board (SEB) describing the sites within Wolverhampton that are regarded as the most vulnerable to unauthorised encampments. SEB have subsequently agreed and approved measures to improve security at sites Ref 1 to Ref 6 in the table below. A further report went to Cabinet Resources Panel on 13 September 2016 seeking approval to start of a process to determine detailed costs of works to prevent unauthorised encampments on Steelpark Way, Wednesfield and Murdoch Road, Bilston.

Reference	Location	Remedy	Total cost of works £
1	Swimming and Fitness Centre, Bentley Bridge	New bollards to be installed by the site entrance	3,000
2	Ashmore Park	New wooden bollards following further site assessment	1,000
3	Fowlers Park	New double opening height barrier	5,000
4	Bee Lane Playing Fields	New double opening height barrier	5,000
5	Science Park (Park and Ride)	New double opening height barrier	5,000
6	Bilston Urban Village development site	Additional heavy concrete blocks	1,000
Total			20,000

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