

180504	<p>To consider the recommendations of Hampshire County Council Gypsy Liaison Officer and Hampshire Police in relation to the possibility of taking measures to prevent future traveller encampments at Stratton Bates Park.</p> <p>The report on these recommendations to the Committee was noted. The Committee was very grateful to both Barry Jordan-Davis and PCSO Rhys Griffiths for their time and contributions to the report.</p>
180504.1	<p>To recommend to Council what, if any, preventative measures should be put in place.</p> <p>The Committee resolved that it would report and recommend to Full Council that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Having taken account of advice from Hampshire County Council's Gypsy Liaison Officer and our PCSO, the main factors considered in reaching its decision are that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) this was the only unauthorised encampment at Stratton Bates Park in recent memory, b) it lasted little more than 24 hours. It is not clear whether the reason for the short duration was the site, the manner in which NATC responded, other factors or some combination of all these. Whatever the reason was, it may discourage the Travellers from returning, c) the financial cost to the Council was negligible, d) the park may now be 'on the map' within the Traveller community, so we cannot rule out the possibility that there might be future unauthorised encampments, e) the park's openness is one of its major features as it is a feature of that part of the town. To instal effective physical prevention measures would have a detrimental impact on the sense of openness and would be problematical due to the location of trees particularly at the eastern end of the park, f) the cost of installing physical prevention measures would be very significant and would come with no guarantee that Travellers would not gain entry in any event. In the words of the Gypsy Liaison Officer it may well be seen as "overkill", g) the only correspondence received from a resident on the issue asked that the park be left as it is, g) Stratton Bates Park is not the only area of open space in Alresford. One particular site of great sensitivity has been identified as a potential alternative site for an unauthorised encampment in the event that travellers were unable to access Stratton Bates Park. This site would in all likelihood prove more problematic than another encampment at Stratton Bates Park, due to potential for damage to the site's trees and old flint wall and to its greater prominence in the town. That site would prove significantly more difficult (if not impossible) to successfully defend in the future; 2) It recommends that no preventative measures be put in place at Stratton Bates Park at present; 3) That the Council should continue to monitor the situation and this issue be reconsidered in the event of any future unauthorised encampment; 4) The sum of £1,500 be allocated from the budget in order to contribute towards potential legal and bailiff fees in the event of any future unauthorised encampment; 5) The repair and reinstatement work needed on existing posts and gates at Stratton Bates Park will be considered at the next meeting of the Committee; 6) The Council should prepare a basic action plan in case of future unauthorised encampments; 7) The Council should consider preparing a guidance note to all residents in relation to unauthorised encampments. It has been suggested that we contact HALC to obtain copies of similar plans from other councils to help with this; 8) The Council and Planning Committees should note that where possible, any new public open space should not be level to the road but instead have either a gradient or be mounded, dependent on design requirements in order to deter future unauthorised encampments; and 9) All councillors and staff to be made aware that along with other groups outside of

the settled community, the Romany Gypsy and Irish Traveller communities are legally recognised ethnic minority groups and as such are covered by the relevant Equality and Human Rights legislation. Therefore, it is essential that NATC does not breach any of its legal duties to these groups when giving any written or verbal advice to residents or otherwise.