# Birmingham City Council

# Report to Cabinet

**25 January 2025**

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| **Title:** | **APPROACH TO SUPPORTING THE GYPSY ROMA TRAVELLER (GRT) COMMUNITY IN BIRMINGHAM** |
| **Lead Cabinet Portfolio:** | Councillor Jayne Francis, Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness |
| **Relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee:** | Homes Overview and Scrutiny Committee |
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| **Authorised by:** | Paul Langford, Strategic Director of City Housing City Housing Directorate |
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| **Is this a Key Decision?**  | Yes |
| **If this is a Key Decision, is this decision listed on the Forward Plan?** | Yes – 013502/2025 |
| **Reason(s) why not included on the Forward Plan:****Is this a Late Report?****Reason(s) why Late:** | Not ApplicableNo |
| **Is this decision eligible for ‘call in?’****If not eligible, please provide reason(s):** | YesYes  |

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| **Wards:** | All  |

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| **Does this report contain exempt or confidential information?** | No  |

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
	1. Birmingham is a large and diverse city, with multiple communities that have specific cultural needs. The Council has a statutory requirement under the Equality Act 2010 to identify and provide appropriate accommodation for specific cultural groups, one of these groups is the Gypsy, Roma Traveller (GRT) community. This report sets out our strategic approach to ensuring this community are adequately supported in the city, including accommodation options as well as other health and wellbeing provision.
	2. The Council accepts that the provision for the GRT community in the city has not been sufficient. The purpose of this report aims to ensure that there is a clear strategic plan to improve the offer from the Council to this community. The report sets out the current and historic provision, the type and format of accommodation we need to identify for the GRT moving forwards and is supported by a delivery plan regarding how we seek to achieve this.
	3. This report must be read in conjunction with the Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTANA) dated May 2024 (Appendix 1). This report sets out the need for specific types of sites for the GRT community, setting clear targets for the Council on what we should aim to deliver. This includes information on the work currently being progressed to limit unauthorised encampments and the pilot programme to explore Negotiated Stopping as an alternative accommodation provision for the GRT community.
	4. The proposed report takes into consideration feedback from Members, Birmingham Fair Housing Campaign, Citizens UK and the Licensing and Public Protection Committee (LPPC). The Council has also worked closely with lived experience groups wherever possible, other Local Authorities and Housing Associations who provide a direct service to the GRT community, aiming to promote best practice interventions and design services based on expert knowledge.
	5. It must be noted that the proposals within this report, particularly the investment required are funded by the Council’s General Fund (GF) provision. The Council have no current controllable budget for the management of GRT sites and this means that any investment being proposed in this area will amount to an additional pressure on the General Fund. The current pressure is recorded at £0.2m and continues to be part of the Council’s plans to enable statutory obligations under the Equality Act 2010 to be fulfilled.
	6. The Council is submitting this report as a first step to build a positive relationship with the GRT community based on an offer to them that makes them feel genuinely included in the wider community. The Council recognises its role in relation to community cohesion which is why the approach set out in this report reaches wider than just accommodation options. The strategic priorities set out in this report reflects our commitment to the GRT community and are set out below:
* Develop a robust accommodation offer for the GRT community that takes into consideration the community’s specific cultural needs.
* Ensure there is a joined-up health and wellbeing offer for the GRT community, promoting access to mainstream services
* Re-set our relationship with the GRT community, using the lived experience of the community to improve services provided
1. COMMISSIONERS’ REVIEW
	1. This section will be completed by the Commissioners and is mandatory for all reports.
2. RECOMMENDATIONS

**That Cabinet:**

* 1. Endorse the strategic priorities identified to better support GRT communities (section 4.22)
	2. Endorse the activities set out in the delivery plan (Appendix 2).
	3. Note the monitoring and reporting arrangements so Cabinet can be assured that the Council will deliver on its commitments to the GRT community.
1. KEY INFORMATION

## Context

* 1. **Definition and Statutory Obligations-** The GRT community is difficult to define as there is no one homogenous group but a range of groups with different histories, cultures, traditions and beliefs, including Romany Gypsies, Welsh Gypsies, Scottish Gypsy Travellers and Irish Travellers. Additionally, there are traveller groups which are “cultural” as opposed to “ethnic” in nature, such as New Age Travellers and travelling show people or waterway travellers. Whilst the most common or stereotypical perception of the GRT community is those groups living in caravans and following a nomadic lifestyle, this group forms only part of the overall GRT community.
	2. For the purposes of this report, the Council uses the inclusive definition of Gypsies and Travellers as set out in the Housing Act 2004:

*“Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds of their own or family’s or dependent’s educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, and all other persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism and/or caravan dwelling.”*

* 1. Race is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. Under the terms of the Act, Romany Gypsies, Scottish Travellers and Irish Travellers are considered as separate races and are protected under the legislation. This Act prohibits unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fair and more equal society.
	2. The Act therefore protects the GRT community from discrimination in a variety of ways, including employment, education, health and the provision of services. Information published by the House of Commons indicates that the GRT community have the worst outcomes of any ethnic group across a wide range of areas, including education, health, employment, criminal justice and hate crime[[1]](#footnote-1).
	3. The Equalities and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has published several reports[[2]](#footnote-2)[[3]](#footnote-3), highlighting multiple inequalities experienced by the GRT community. These inequalities include economic inclusion and access to employment, relationships with and experiences of accessing healthcare, social care, education and other public services; experiences of the legal and criminal justice systems; racism and discrimination; access to housing; political participation; a lack of engagement with members of the GRT communities and services for both younger and older people.
	4. **Need in Birmingham-** The accommodation needs of the GRT community can be broadly split into four categories:
* Those that live in standard “bricks and mortar” accommodation.
* Those that live on a permanent managed site.
* Those that travel and live on a transit site or open land.
* Travelling Show people who travel through part of the year but then need a base for the remainder of the year.
	1. The 2011 Census confirmed that around 76% of the GRT community lived in “bricks and mortar” accommodation, with 24% living in caravans or other mobile or temporary structures. Of those members of the GRT community living in caravans or other mobile or temporary structures, 57% were residing on private sites, 29% were on sites operated by local authorities and 14% were on unauthorised sites.
	2. The 2021 Census included a “Roma” category for the first time, following the introduction of a “Gypsy and Irish Traveller” category in the 2011 Census. Information from the 2021 Census data confirmed the following:
		1. 71,440 people nationally identified as Gypsy or Irish Traveller, equivalent to 0.12% of the usual resident population of the UK.
		2. Those identifying as Gypsy or Irish Traveller reported poorer health across all age groups and across both sexes, compared to the wider England and Wales population.
		3. 56.8% of those identifying as Gypsy or Irish Traveller had no qualifications, compared with 18.2% of the England and Wales population.
	3. In the 2021 Census, there were 770 people identifying as Gypsy Travellers residing in Birmingham, representing around 0.06% of the usual resident population. This is lower than the national average for England and Wales of 0.11%. Of the self-identifying Gypsy Traveller population in Birmingham, only 2% identified that they were at the time of the Census living in a caravan, mobile home or temporary structure whereas 98% were living in “bricks and mortar” accommodation.
	4. The below table sets out the total numbers identifying as Gypsy or Travellers in the 2021 Census:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Area | Gypsy or Irish Traveller Count | Overall Population Count | % of overall Population Count |
| Birmingham | 770 | 1,144,920 | 0.07 |
| Coventry | 325 | 345,325 | 0.09 |
| Dudley | 450 | 323,490 | 0.13 |
| Sandwell | 350 | 341,830 | 0.10 |
| Solihull | 80 | 216,240 | 0.04 |
| Walsall | 375 | 284,125 | 0.13 |
| Wolverhampton | 270 | 263,275 | 0.10 |
| England and Wales | 71,440 | 59,597,540 | 0.12 |
| England | 67,815 | 56,490,050 | 0.12 |

* 1. It should be noted that the above information varies greatly from other information sources such as the Council’s GTANA, which puts the total national Traveller population at more than 120,000. Other academic assessments of the combined population of Gypsy, Irish Traveller and other Traveller groups range from 120,000 to 300,000. It is perhaps unsurprising that arriving at a definitive number is difficult, given the transient and disparate nature of some elements of the GRT community.
	2. In a survey in July 2023 MHCLG found that there were 285 Gypsy and Traveller caravans located throughout Birmingham and selected neighbouring authorities. The numbers of caravans found during this survey, and the relative size of this sample against the overall population, was as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Area | Number of Caravans | Number of Caravans per 100,000 population |
| Birmingham | 55 | 5 |
| Dudley | 69 | 21 |
| Sandwell  | 16 | 5 |
| Walsall | 96 | 34 |
| Wolverhampton | 49 | 19 |
| West Midlands | NA | 104 |
| National | NA | 42 |

* 1. Whilst the above data on national and local context is useful in providing a wider context regarding the accommodation need of the GRT community, the Council’s approach is to define the need for accommodation for this community based on the findings of the most recent GTANA.
	2. In June 2024, the Council received a revised GTANA assessment from RRR Consultancy. Within this assessment, new proposals were made for the minimum transit provision over the next 20 years based on existing and projected data on the number of Traveller households both nationally and within the West Midlands. Based on these projections, the number of pitches required between 2024 and 2044 is as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Period | Requirement |
| Years 1-5 | 25 |
| Years 6-10 | 25+5 (30) |
| Years 11-15 | 30+6 (36) |
| Years 16-20 | 36+6 (42) |
| Total | 42 |

* 1. Based on the GTANA, the Council is not currently meeting its minimum requirement for transit pitches. Even if both transit sites were open at full capacity, at best this would provide between 25 and 30 pitches (assuming 12 pitches at Proctor Street and a maximum of 18 pitches at Tameside Drive), and would therefore be insufficient to meet anticipated need from year 11 onwards.
	2. **Unauthorised Encampments-** Between January 2020 and July 2023, the average number of caravans recorded on authorised encampments within Birmingham was 10. During the period 2018/19 to 2022/23, there were a total of 502 unauthorised encampments recorded within Birmingham, of which 78% took place on publicly owned land. On average, each unauthorised encampment consisted of between 9 and 10 caravans and lasted for 6 or 7 days. The use of unauthorised encampments presents significant costs to the Council, both in terms of managing and moving on sites and remediation to damage and refuse left following an encampment.
	3. The below table sets out the number of unauthorised encampments (UE’s) across the city between April 2023 and August 2024:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Month | Number of UE’s | Highest number of sites used at one time | Highest number of caravans in any UE | Average number of days stayed. | Longest number of days stayed. |
| April 2023 | 11 | 4 | 25 | 4.1 | 7 |
| May 2023 | 9 | 3 | 21 | 3.36 | 5 |
| June 2023 | 11 | 4 | 15 | 4.2 | 6 |
| July 2023 | 12 | 5 | 45 | 5.6 | 8 |
| August 2023 | 10 | 5 | 25 | 6.9 | 39 |
| September 2023 | 9 | 3 | 22 | 6.0 | 16 |
| October 2023 | 10 | 4 | 20 | 5.2 | 10 |
| November 2023 | 11 | 4 | 19 | 6.0 | 21 |
| December 2023 | 3 | 3 | 10 | 9.25 | 12 |
| January 2024 | 3 | 1 | 15 | 10.33 | 13 |
| February 2024 | 4 | 2 | 25 | 4.9 | 20 |
| March 2024 | 1 | 1 | 20 | 10.0 | 10 |
| April 2024 | 4 | 2 | 15 | 7.33 | 20 |
| May 2024 | 6 | 4 | 50 | 6.0 | 20 |
| June 2024 | 7 | 3 | 45 | 4.33 | 9 |
| July 2024 | 9 | 4 | 45 | 6.7 | 22 |
| August 2024 | 11 | 3 | 12 | 7.33 | 12 |

* 1. Whilst the Council and West Midlands Police have powers to move on unauthorised encampments, there are two factors that affect the longevity of any encampment. Firstly, the Council (and other public bodies) all have to consider the welfare of anyone who resides within their area. Therefore, any unauthorised encampment on public land must be assessed for any welfare needs including; educational, health, and housing need. Once these are assessed then consideration can be given to recovery of the land and how long the encampment will be tolerated. Secondly, the available powers are hampered by the lack of an available transit site to direct encampments to. Having operational transit sites or similar with suitable welfare provisions (water and toileting) would make the proportionality of moving unauthorised encampments quickly to these provisions much quicker. The absence of such pitches undoubtable prolongs the duration of the unauthorised encampment. It also creates a situation where encampments move a short distance and require repeatedly moving on. This demonstrates that the Council have a role to play in improving the provision available to prevent a worsening position from unauthorised encampments.
	2. The Council has two existing transit sites within the city to meet the needs of the GRT community at Proctor Street in Nechells and Tameside Drive in Castle Vale. A transit site is an authorized site where members of the travelling community can be directed when in the city area. A transit site typically provides a hard standing for holding caravans, a secure boundary and basic sanitary provision including potable water, often at a communal level. Most sites will have a level of basic facility to include lighting and electricity. The history on both sites has been challenging in the sense that there has been no investment in resource to manage these sites and they have been regularly damaged, amounting to long-term closures period for repairs.
	3. **Negotiated Stopping-** Recommendations made within the GTANA were for the Council to explore the use of “Negotiated Stopping” as an alternative provision to increase the number of available pitches, bring Proctor Street back into operational use and to also explore the viability of bringing Tameside Drive back into operational use.
	4. Negotiated Stopping is where a common agreement is made between Gypsy Travellers and the Council to utilise an unused piece of land as a temporary stopping place. This approach is favoured by Gypsy Traveller communities as it provides a balanced and sensitive approach to managing often seasonal demand for transit capacity and offers more flexibility in terms of the location of sites rather than all Gypsy Traveller families being directed to the same site.
	5. Negotiated stopping offers a different type of provision for the GRT community and a pilot programme is scheduled to commence in Spring 2025 to gauge the effectiveness of this option in reducing the number of unauthorised encampments and in reducing demand for established transit sites. Based on historical data, it is anticipated that the Council would need to provide a pool of between 12 and 15 sites between April and October. Colleagues in planning are actively determining how this recommendation can be delivered and what sites could be brought forward. The Council will need to assess the success of adopting the Negotiated Stopping approach before it can be embedded more broadly as a way forward. Regular reports will be submitted to the Licencing and Public Protection Committee (LPPC) to ensure appropriate oversight.

##  Proposal and Reasons for Recommendations

* 1. The Council are proposing the below strategic priorities to improve the offer for the GRT community in the city:
	+ **Priority 1-** Develop a robust accommodation offer for the GRT community that takes into consideration the community’s specific cultural needs.
	+ **Priority 2-** Ensure there is a joined-up health and wellbeing offer for the GRT community, promoting access to mainstream services
	+ **Priority 3-** Enhance our relationship with the GRT community, using the lived experience of the community to improve services provided
	1. **Priority 1-** The GTANA sets out that the Council do not have sufficient provision for the GRT community, meaning there is a greater impact when unauthorised encampments do arise and there is little choice and control for members of the GRT community who may want to reside in Birmingham.
	2. The Council intends to review the physical quality and condition of existing transit sites, as well as exploring alternative proposals such as Negotiated Stopping to both improve and grow the accommodation options for the GRT community.
	3. **Priority 2-** Whilst building an accommodation offer, the Council must ensure that there is sufficient resource and partnership working to enable the GRT provision to flourish, reducing the potential for anti-social behaviour.
	4. Anti-social behaviour and damage on existing sites have been a regular occurrence, partially because the poor quality and lack of facilities, meaning sites doesn’t lend themselves to a sustainable and harmonious community. Additionally, the Council have historically been unable to resource the management of GRT sites effectively, meaning the ability of members of the community to maintain the site as a temporary home was often unsustainable.
	5. The Council’s lack of resourcing in this area also means different agencies often failed to capitalise on opportunities to support the community. It is accepted that education, social care and housing services have all been involved with the GRT community in some shape or form but multi-agency working to ensure the package of support around a household has not been as robust as it could have been. This is because of dedicated resource and lack of clear leadership within the Council.
	6. Moving forwards, the Council proposes to deliver a more collaborative service to the GRT community, using intelligence across multiple agencies to ensure that these households receive the right support, without simply focusing on accommodation as their only need.
	7. **Priority 3-** Through the consultation process, it has been clear that the relationship between the GRT community and the Council is not a strong one. Interactions are predominately focused on enforcement where something has gone wrong and there is limited learning from lived experience within the community.
	8. This means that there is no real dialogue with the GRT community around what they would like in terms of accommodation options, engagement with other agencies and professionals and how we can effectively promote their culture and way of living. A key strategic priority of this report is focused on building a more effective relationship with the GRT community, enabling the Council to deliver services based on what they want to see.
	9. These strategic priorities are intended to link to the strategic outcomes and priorities set out in the Council’s Corporate Plan in the following ways.
	10. **A Prosperous Birmingham** – by providing greater opportunities for the GRT community to participate in the city’s overall inclusive growth, enabling the GRT community within the city (both settled and transient) to participate in, and benefit from, the opportunities provided by improved economic outcomes. This is particularly important for a community that research confirms has lower levels of literacy and educational attainment, limiting employment options, and whose traditional occupations have been limited by tighter regulation and technological advancements.
	11. **An Inclusive Birmingham** – the GRT community will benefit from outcomes aimed at tackling poverty and inequality across the city. By enhancing the Council’s links with the GRT community, greater opportunities will be provided for this community to have their voices heard in a meaningful way and feel that their cultural diversity is both recognised and celebrated by the Council. The development of a whole-Council offer for the GRT community will deliver a supportive and enabling environment where members of this community feel that they are active participants in city, which is essential for a community that if often marginalised and subject to discrimination and prejudice.
	12. **A Safe Birmingham** – the provision of safe, well-managed transit sites and pitch provision will ensure that members of the Gypsy Traveller community are provided with appropriate secure facilities to stay, minimising the need for unauthorised encampments which can be targeted due to prejudice towards the GRT community. The reduction in unauthorised encampments will also provide enhanced perception of safety for residents residing in areas where these encampments are frequent. By building greater relationships with the Gypsy Traveller community through the lived experience model and a visible and accessible site management presence, this will enable vulnerable citizens to be identified and provided with appropriate support and assistance whilst they are residing in the city, where at present there is a limited welfare offer to Gypsy Travellers using transit sites or unauthorised encampments.
	13. **A Healthy Birmingham** – Gypsies and Travellers experience poorer physical and mental health and are often prevented from accessing appropriate health care advice and support due to practical and social barriers. Whilst the Council engages with the GRT community in various ways across directorates, the lack of a joined-up approach may mean that opportunities to identify and tackle health inequalities and provide appropriate and long-term support to those members of the GRT community requiring access to these services; this may be due either to a lack of knowledge of the services available, or the lack of stability of accommodation provision, which mean that these services are difficult to access with any frequency or certainty.
	14. **A Green Birmingham** – the provision of appropriate transit sites and Negotiated Stopping sites with appropriate refuse and waste provision, will contribute to the reduction of unauthorised encampments and the issues with refuse and waste that often occur during and after these encampments. This will also contribute to the availability of green spaces across the city for citizens where unauthorised encampments on such green spaces may be a disincentive for citizens to use these spaces.

## Other Options Considered

* 1. **Deliver the service as is-** The Council could make the decision to continue to the manage their GRT provision in the same way. This means continuing to manage the current transit sites in the same way, reactively responding to repairs, vandalism and having long periods where sites are closed whilst works are undertaken.

Whilst this option means that the Council would avoid investing in additional resource, particularly in the current financial climate, it is likely that investment will continue to be required on site, particularly responding to high levels of anti-social behaviour and vandalism.

1. RISK MANAGEMENT
	1. There are several risks to be considered, and these have been set out below. Monitoring and governance arrangements for the delivery of this strategy, including risks will be managed through the monthly departmental working group with regular reporting into DMT.
	2. To provide Members with assurance that the commitments set out in this report are being achieved, the Council will report on progress quarterly at LPCC and Cabinet will receive a report in 12 months-time on progress, clearly setting out what has been achieved at that point in time.

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| **Risk** | **Impact** | **Mitigation**  |
| Ongoing General Fund (GF) investment adds to the Council’s challenging financial position | High | Proactive investment in staffing will lead to a reduction in spend (repairs, vandalism, enforcement activity).  |
| Council departments have reduced headcount as part of the savings requirements- lack of resource to support a robust GRT offer | Medium | Opportunities to tap into Early Intervention & Prevention programme, as well as using voluntary sector agencies to support the offer. |
| Lack of lived experience information; meaningful consultation with the GRT community. | Medium | Some consultation undertaken, building a better relationship has formed one of the longer-term strategic priorities. |
| Lack of definitive need data for the GRT community across the city, enabling a robust offer based on the evidence available. | Medium | Commissioned GTANA provides the Council with a framework for future provision, particularly given the conflicting data on need in the city. |
| Take up of Negotiated Stopping sites may not work for the GRT community | Medium | Pilot approach, starting Spring 2025, there is the opportunity to test and pilot the approach. |

1. CONSULTATION
	1. The Council have utilised feedback from the LPCC and have undertaken an analysis of complaints, anti-social behaviour case studies and major repairs to understand what is and what is not working in the way the Council deliver provision for the GRT community.
	2. The Council have also consulted with several lived experience groups such as St Margarets Church who provide outreach support to the traveller community, as well as on site travellers in Walsall, Sandwell and Dudley. Traveller Movement and have met with organisations such as Rooftop Housing Association who have a strong background in working closely with the GRT community. The Council also released a Be Heard survey, recognising that members of the public often have strong feelings around how GRT communities are managed.
	3. The Council has recognised throughout this process that there is very little open dialogue between the GRT community and professionals in the city. The Council have bolstered their engagement with lived experience groups like Birmingham Fair Housing Campaign and Citizens UK over the last 12 months. The Council intend to replicate this approach by seeking opportunities to work specifically with the GRT community, hence why this is one of the strategic priorities set out in this report.
	4. The Council have consulted internally to deliver this strategy; a departmental working group has been mobilised bringing together colleagues in legal, planning, housing and education to ensure a joined-up approach to future delivery of any GRT offer. Different departments across the Council are aligned and will continue to work closely together to deliver a high-quality service. This departmental working group will continue to operate with a focus on the strategic objectives set out in this report.
2. MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

**Overview and Scrutiny**

* 1. The Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Committee have been provided with a copy of this report and their comments are… ADD HERE

**Finance**

* 1. Investment in a robust offer for the GRT community is challenging for the Council as funding must come through the General Fund (GF) and is not part of any existing budget. This means that any additional resource, or expenditure on either new or identified sites will place an additional pressure on the Council’s finances.
	2. Accepting that funding these services enables the Council to deliver on its obligations against the Equality Act 2010, a sum of £0.2m per year has been proposed in the current MTFP refresh which is due to be set by Full Council in February 2025. This recognises that the Council have not previously invested in this provision, however, have continued to commit financially to repairing the current sites, responding to vandalism and responding to the impact of anti-social behaviour. This annual budget will fund two members of staff to manage and maintain the sites and the Council’s relations with the occupants, as well as identifying the future requirements for GRT support across the city.
	3. Whilst there is no existing budget to support this approach, the Council will be required to continue to invest in sites that are requiring more investment due to a lack of management. This report sets out the MFTP pressure to help the Council to move from a reactive spending approach towards a proactive approach, that will be likely to reduce the need for further unplanned investment.
	4. A proactive approach to supporting a hard-to-reach community will have far reaching benefits across the Council’s front-line services and across the wider public sector. On a more direct level, there is an opportunity to make a consistent income through rents on transit sites. A proactive resourcing approach means the likelihood of regular rent collection increases. Rental income has not been built into the financial model because of a lack of relationships with the GRT community and the cultural issues faced within a community predominantly operating with cash, and the Council being unable to collect this. However, a more proactive approach gives a greater opportunity to capitalise on the opportunity to deliver a rental income, mitigating any loss to the Council.

**Legal**

* 1. Race is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. Under the terms of the Act, Romany Gypsies, Scottish Travellers and Irish Travellers are considered as separate races and are protected under the legislation. This Act prohibits unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fair and more equal society.
	2. The Council has a legal obligation ensure that they enable the GRT community to play an active part in day-to-day life, ensuring they are not discriminated against or isolated from the vital services needed to support them. This includes access to accommodation options, education and facilities that are conducive to everyday family life.

**Equalities**

* 1. The Council is required to comply with its obligations to the GRT community in line with the protections afforded under the Equality Act 2010. It is understood and accepted that the GRT community are more likely to be discriminated against or isolated because of the cultural beliefs and way of living. The Council have a role to play in ensuring community cohesion, supporting the GRT to live safety and be fully included in their local community. This report seeks to improve the opportunities for the GRT community in Birmingham, with our obligations against the Equality Act 2010 in mind.

**Procurement**

* 1. There are no direct procurement implications because of this report. However, it is likely that developing and maintaining the physical condition GRT sites will require the support of Council procured contractors. Any additional procurement that needs to be undertaken for this purpose, will be undertaken in line with procurement regulations and Council governance arrangements.

**People Services**

* 1. The Council have agreed to deploy additional resources to proactively manage the Council’s existing transit sites. The GRT community operate differently day-to-day than tenants and leaseholders of Council homes. As a result, there will be a requirement to ensure these resources (when recruited) are trained and have a good understanding of how to work with this community, in a way that respects their cultural needs.

**Climate Change, Nature and Net Zero**

* 1. There are no direct implications on the Council’s route to zero objectives because of this report.

## Corporate Parenting

* 1. The Council has an obligation to the GRT community as part of its corporate parenting role. The provision of appropriate transit sites and a joined-up health and wellbeing offer to the GRT community will enable the Council to ensure that the needs of vulnerable children within the GRT community are being met. This includes improved access to accommodation, education and joined-up Council services.
1. APPENDICES
	1. Appendix 1- Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessments (GTANA)
	2. Appendix 2- Gypsy Traveller Delivery Plan
1. House of Commons (2019) Tackling inequalities faced by Gypsy, Roma and Travelling Communities. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. EHRC (2009) Inequalities experiences by Gypsy and Traveller communities: a review. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. EHRC (2016) Assessing local housing authorities’ progress in meeting the accommodation needs of Gypsy and Traveller communities in England. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)