

# Item 12a

## Supplementary Report to Cabinet

17<sup>th</sup> February, 2005

## Report of Chief Executive Officer

### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION MEMBER TASK GROUP – GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS**

#### **1. Summary**

This report seeks Authorisation for Councillor K. Noble to attend a meeting of the Local Government Association's Task Group on Gypsies and Travellers.

#### **2. Background**

2.1 The lack of suitable temporary and permanent sites for gypsies and travellers and the associated problems arising from unauthorised camping have emerged as issues of increasing concern for local authorities and residents in both rural and urban areas. Many authorities suggest the incidences of unauthorised encampments and unauthorised development have significantly increased and have in many cases led to mounting tensions between traveller and settled communities.

2.2 There has been a call from many local authorities for the Local Government Association (LGA) to take a stronger position on this problem, particularly in relation to enforcement issues, and to work with the Government to improve the current enforcement system.

2.3 The LGA Executive has therefore established a Task Group on Gypsy and Travellers issues. The Group is expected to review the current situation regarding traveller site provision, respond to enforcement concerns and to identify advice and guidance needed by local authorities.

#### **3. Member Representation**

3.1 Councillor K. Noble, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Regeneration has been invited by the LGA to join the Task Group and to attend its next meeting to be held on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2005 at LGA Headquarters in London.

3.2 Councillor Noble has expressed a wish to accept the invitation to attend the meeting with a view to identifying what benefit the initiative will have for the region generally and Sedgefield Borough in particular.

#### **4. Recommendation**

That Councillor Noble be authorised to attend the meeting of the Task Group on 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 2005.

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#### **Background Papers**

Letter from LGA dated 2<sup>nd</sup> February, 2005  
Gypsy Task Group Scoping Paper

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