

**RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET 6 OCTOBER 2015 FROM THE JOINT PANEL
MEETING HELD ON 30 SEPTEMBER 2015**

RD&EC65: CABINET REPORT – RESIDENTIAL CARAVAN SITE LICENSING

The Housing Services Operations Manager presented the Cabinet report. She reminded those present that in June 2014 a report had been taken to Cabinet to approve the commencement of a public consultation exercise to the proposed revised residential caravan site licensing conditions.

The report now being considered presented the results of the consultation exercise, the proposed amended residential caravan site licence conditions and a proposed fees policy which would come into effect in April 2016.

The Chairman thanked the Housing Services Operations Manager for her report and invited questions and comments from the Panels, as summarised below.

In response to a question from the Vice Chairman, Councillor Mrs Wright, the Housing Services Operations Manager explained that the interpretation of a mobile home was a mobile structure that could be lifted by sturdy means. The Residential Caravan Site Licences applied to permanent sites, however there were some exemptions such as Council owned gypsy and traveller sites.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Mellish asked if any concerns had been raised through the consultation exercise with regard to the introduction of licence fees. The Housing Services Operations Manager explained that no major concerns had been raised through the consultation process and responses to the consultation were included within the Cabinet report.

In response to a question from Councillor Mrs Bambridge, it was confirmed that if a property was a permanent home it would be subject to Council tax.

Councillor Crofts asked if there was a difference between mobile homes and caravans and the Housing Services Operations Manager explained that for the purpose of the residential caravan site licensing scheme it was considered to be a mobile structure and included park homes.

Councillor Smith asked how the fees had been calculated and the Housing Services Operations Manager explained that Government Guidance had been looked at and comparisons made to what was charged by other Local Authorities. She explained that the fees charged needed to take into account the rurality of the borough and the cost involved in travelling to sites.

Councillor Hipperson referred to planning issues with a caravan park within his ward. The Housing Services Operations Manager explained that caravan parks had certain regulations that had to be adhered to including the distance between caravans etc. and his query may be a planning consideration.

Councillor Smith referred to page 50 of the agenda, the draft single new conditions which stated that the site owner shall establish whether the site is at risk from flooding by referring to the flood risk information pages on the Borough Council's website. He asked what would happen if people did not have access to the website and asked if there were other places that this information could be found. The Housing Services Operations Manager confirmed that she would enquire what other methods of obtaining the information were available and feedback to the Panel.

Following the meeting it was confirmed that there were other means of access such as a telephone line for the Environment Agency. Alerts could be made to landlines as well as text messages.

RESOLVED: That the Regeneration & Development and Environment & Community Panel support the recommendations to Cabinet as set out below:

1. Members note the report and endorse the approach to dealing with, and enforcement associated with residential caravan sites.
2. Members approve the amendments to the standard residential caravan site licence conditions.
3. Members approve the adoption of the proposed Fees Policy with annual fees commencing in April 2016.
4. It is proposed that the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder with responsibility for housing be given delegated authority to make minor amendments to the standard conditions to ensure it complies with legislative requirements, Government Guidance and caselaw.