
IMPROVEMENTS TO HONEYPOT LANE CARAVAN SITE

**Responsible Cabinet Member(s) -Councillor Chris McEwan,
Community Protection Portfolio**

Responsible Director(s) - John Buxton, Director of Development and Environment

Purpose of Report

1. To report on the allocation of grant from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) and to authorise the release of the funding.

Background

2. The Council was successful in a bid for 2003/04 for the improvement of 14 amenity blocks and a transit site at Honeypot Lane Caravan site. A bid was made to the ODPM for further funding for 2004/05 to supplement the works currently in progress. This has been successful and funding needs to be released and arrangements made for the works to be carried out.

Information and Analysis

3. The ODPM have approved a grant of £312,210.86. The works involve the provision of amenity blocks to the remaining pitches.
4. The Council selected a contractor in 2003/04 to carry out the works following tender and the contractor is currently on-site completing the works. There are advantages in seeking to negotiate this work with the existing contractor:
 - (a) He is already on-site, would be able to use his facilities, equipment and employees which should ensure value for money.
 - (b) There would be officer time saved in the tendering process.
 - (c) The work could begin immediately and ensure that the work is completed in the time period.
 - (d) The contractor is familiar with the site and the construction details.
 - (e) The current contractor has performed well and is meeting contract specifications.

- (f) Officers have been in contact with the ODPM and they are agreeable to negotiation as the original contract was subject to competitive tender.

Outcome of Consultation

5. Discussions have been held with the Lessee of the site, Darlington Primary Care Trust, Darlington Sure Start, travellers on the site and various officers concerned with travellers. All support the works to improve conditions for travellers.

Legal Implications

6. This report has been considered by the Borough Solicitor for legal implications in accordance with the Council's approved procedures. There are no issues which the Borough Solicitor considers need to be brought to the specific attention of Members, other than those highlighted in the report.

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

7. The contents of this report have been considered in the context of the requirements placed on the Council by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, namely, the duty on the Council to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area. It is not considered that the contents of this report have any such effect.

Financial Implications

8. The scheme is completely funded from the ODPM and other organisations. The lessee of the site has a full repairing lease and there will be no ongoing revenue costs.

Council Policy Framework

9. The issues contained within this report do not represent change to Council policy or the Council's policy framework, however, the waiving of the Contract Procedure Rules need to be considered by Council.

Key Decisions

10. This report is considered as a key decision as it is significant in terms of its effect on the travelling community living in Darlington.

Decision Deadline

11. For the purpose of the 'call-in' procedure this does not represent an urgent matter.

Recommendation

12. It is recommended that :-

- (a) The scheme for the improvement of amenity blocks at Honeypot Lane Caravan site be approved and funding of £312,210.86 be released.
- (b) Council be requested to waive Contract Procedure Rules.
- (c) The Director of Development and Environment be given Delegated Powers to negotiate the contract with the existing contractor.

Reasons

13. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons :-

- (a) To secure improvements to the site.
- (b) To secure value for money and minimise delays in construction.

John Buxton
Director of Development and Environment

Background Papers

Letter from the ODPM dated 20 April 2004

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BAH