

# Chichester District Council

Cabinet

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## Options to deter unauthorised vehicle encampments on CDC land.

### 1. Contacts

#### Report Author:

Kevin Carter – CCS Divisional Manager e-mail  
Telephone: 01243 534697 E-mail: [kcarter@chichester.gov.uk](mailto:kcarter@chichester.gov.uk)

#### Cabinet Member:

Penny Plant - Cabinet Member for Environment and Chichester Contract Services  
Telephone: 01243 514034 E-mail: [pplant@chichester.gov.uk](mailto:pplant@chichester.gov.uk)

### 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That Cabinet approve that officers focus on New Park and East Broyle sites to ensure that appropriate measures to deter unauthorised vehicle access are installed by the end of the financial year.
- 2.2 That officers bring back worked up proposals, including budget implications for consideration at the October Cabinet meeting.
- 2.3 That a programme of engagement and consultation with residents who live adjacent to the two sites and other impacted organisations commences.

### 3. Background

- 3.1 This Council has taken a strong and active role in supporting authorised locations for travellers to reside within the District through its provision of an authorised transit site, work with partners and planning and other policies to support suitable homes for the Gypsy and traveller communities. Despite that, unauthorised encampments continue to be a feature of district life.
- 3.2 Unauthorised encampments on CDC and private land happen on an annual basis typically between May and September. The number and size of incursions vary year on year but on average 10 -12 such incursions of between 6 – 10 caravans happen each year.
- 3.3 There are 35 parks and open spaces within the district of which 13 have in the past 10 years have had an unauthorised encampment on it that affects the users or neighbours of those locations.
- 3.4 CDC parks and open spaces come in all shapes and sizes. Some sites already have low level deterrents in place, such as Florence Park (rail and post) and Oaklands Park, whereas some have no physical deterrents in place, such as New Park.
- 3.5 From experience it is very difficult to fully prevent incursions onto land such as parks without significantly changing their appearance and general public access. Incursions on both

Florence Road and Oaklands Park over the last few years, both of which already have deterrents in place, have demonstrated this.

- 3.6 CDC Car Parks are also subject to regular incursions. On these sites effective deterrents are harder to implement as by their nature they are designed for ease of vehicle access.
- 3.7 Whilst many incursions are un-welcome they are often not too disruptive. However, recent incursions on East Broyle and New Park, by a group of very anti-social travellers, had a significant negative impact to the everyday lives of local residents. It has demonstrated that for the parks and green spaces that are in close proximity to local residents, deterrent measures should now be re-considered to reflect the additional level of impact caused to users and neighbours of those parks.
- 3.8 A review of all CDC parks and open spaces has been conducted and 23 out of the 35 sites have been identified as being potentially at risk of incursion either due to their location, size or general layout. Any existing deterrent measures that are present at these sites have been recorded and 7 sites have been identified as potentially requiring additional deterrent measures. For these sites indicative costings have been estimated to undertake the work based on an officer selected option although further work and engagement is required before these options and therefore costs can be confirmed. Appendix A refers.
- 3.9 A similar review of CDC car parks (focussing on Northgate) has commenced although deterrent measures are more difficult to install in car parks. Measures in car parks are likely to focus on limiting high sided vehicles using certain areas of the car park that will be more sensitive to un-authorized vehicle incursions such as the north west sections of Northgate car park.
- 3.10 A Senior Officer group has been established comprising Divisional Managers from Communities, Place and Chichester Contract Services and the Communication Manager with the objective to deliver the above stated outcomes.

#### **4 Outcomes to be Achieved**

- 4.1 To demonstrate to local residents that CDC are acting to achieve the right local balance to deter traveller incursions but maintain the spaces as parks for the enjoyment of all.
- 4.2 To provide an increased level of deterrent in key sensitive sites.
- 4.3 That any deterrent measures installed do not significantly restrict the current functionality of the space and wherever possible is in keeping with the current 'look and feel' of the site and complies with any relevant planning requirements.

#### **5 Proposal**

- 5.1 With the incursions onto New Park and East Broyle green space being the most recent and with New Park having suffered many previous incursions, it is proposed that these two sites are prioritised to receive additional deterrents.
- 5.2 New Park is located within an area of historic importance and as such will require additional considerations with respect to the type of deterrent that can be implemented. It is also used for sports pitches, any changes to which will require Sport England's input and approval. East Broyle is less sensitive and will just require normal planning permissions before anything can be implemented.

- 5.3 Pre-planning advice has been received from CDC Planning team to help identify what measures were unlikely to be supported for both sites. This has helped refine the options that can be considered for each site.
- 5.4 The Officer Group have decided that a focussed engagement plan with the affected neighbourhoods, impacted communities and other directly interested individuals and organisations is preferred rather than full district wide consultation. In doing so we would hold on-site meetings with these groups to illustrate the different deterrent options that can be considered. We would stress that these are only deterrents and not prevention measures. It is hoped these sessions will help those impacted, with an active interest in the open spaces, input into the deterrents to be implemented.
- 5.5 On completion, a financial estimate of preferred schemes will be undertaken and a revised Cabinet report prepared for October Cabinet. This report will request authority to proceed and to incur the necessary costs.
- 5.6 Following approval to proceed the following indicative timescales will follow
- Budget & approval to proceed 5<sup>th</sup> October
  - Appoint landscape architect 11<sup>th</sup> October
  - Prepare and submit planning application 1<sup>st</sup> November
  - Tender for works January
  - Planning approval Mid-February
  - Appoint contractor End February
  - Undertake works March 2022

## 6 Alternatives Considered

- 6.1 Do nothing:- Members and officers will be aware of the recent strong representations from many residents about the impact of recent unauthorised encampments. During covid the Courts eviction process have been significantly delayed, meaning incursions may happen again and for potentially longer periods. These factors lead to a view that this option is inappropriate to the harms caused.
- 6.2 Protect all sites: Considering many of these sites have some low level or no protection already and have not had an incursion onto them, to protect these sites would not be good value to the public purse.
- 6.3 Undertake a full consultation: - Whilst initially considered it was felt this was not appropriate for engagement on two specific sites and may restrict our abilities to implement any measure before the Spring 2022.

## 7 Resource and Legal Implications

- 7.1 The contract will be managed by existing staff with support from external contractors.
- 7.2 Planning applications will require support from the planning department.
- 7.3 Legal challenge to the proposed works is possible.

## 8 Consultation

- 8.1 As part of the planning application process, input will be requested from the local community, Sport England and other interested bodies.

## 9 Community Impact and Corporate Risks

- 9.1 It is hoped the measures proposed will reduce the negative impact that traveller incursions have on the communities that are in close proximity to them.
- 9.2 It should be noted that the travellers themselves could be considered part of our community and any deterrents that restrict their nomadic lifestyle will have a negative impact on them and may be considered as traveller discrimination.

## 10 Other Implications

Are there any implications for the following?		
	Yes	No
<b>Crime and Disorder</b> – potential positive impact by restricting illegal or unauthorised access to CDC land and as such prevent potential crime and dis-order that may follow such incursions.	x	
<b>Biodiversity and Climate Change Mitigation</b>		x
<b>Human Rights and Equality Impact</b> – All decisions will need to be taken considering the duties of all sections of the community – residents in particular neighbours, legitimate users of the park as well as travellers and their Article 8 rights.	x	
<b>Safeguarding and Early Help</b>		x
<b>General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)</b>		x
<b>Health and Wellbeing</b> – by preventing some incursions this will have a positive impact to the wellbeing of local residents.	x	

## 11 Appendices

A: - List of CDC parks and open spaces with proposed deterrents

## 12 Background

None.

Site	Existing security	Previous incursions Y/N	Method	Options for additional deterrents	Meterage to secure	Bollards	Ditch and bund	Access gate	Total cost £
NEW PARK ROAD	Fence and hedge alongside Alexandra Road. Site can be accessed from highway on two sides.	Y	Drove onto site from highway.	Propose combination of ditch and bund and timber bollards. Vehicle access gate required for maintenance purposes.	420m	8m £240	420m £8400	£1,785	£10,425
EAST BROYLE	The site can be accessed on two sides from the highway.	Y	Drove onto site from highway.	Propose combination of ditch and bund and timber bollards. Vehicle access gate required for maintenance purposes.	730m	8m £240	730m £14,600	£1,785	£16,625
SHERBORNE ROAD	None. Site can be accessed on all sides.	N	N/A	Propose combination of ditch and bund and timber bollards. Vehicle access gate required for maintenance purposes.	580m	8m £240	580 £11,600	£1,785	£13,625
WHYKE OVAL	None. The site can be accessed on all sides.	Y	Drove onto site from highway.	Propose combination of ditch and bund and timber bollards. Vehicle access gate required for maintenance purposes.	480m	8m £240	480m £9,600	£1,785	£11,625
JUBILEE PARK GARDENS	None. Site can be accessed at various locations.	Y	Drove onto site from highway.	Propose bollards at 2m intervals. Vehicle access gate required for maintenance purposes.	400m	400m £24,000		£1,785	£25,785
WESTGATE FIELDS	The site can be accessed on two sides from the highway approx 300m	Y	Drove onto site from highway.	Propose combination of ditch and bund and timber bollards. Vehicle access gate required for maintenance purposes.	400m	8m £240	400m £8,000	£1,785	£10,025
KINGSWAY	The site can be accessed from various points on the highway.	Y	Drove onto site from highway.	Propose combination of ditch and bund and timber bollards. Vehicle access gate required for maintenance purposes.	500m	8m £240	500m £10,000	£1,785	£12,025
FLORENCE PARK	Perimeter post and rail fencing. Heavy duty metal vehicle access gates locked.	Y	Forced. Removed fencing. Removed hedges. Broke locks on gates.	Site is already reasonably secure. Entry forced through damage in the past.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
OAKLANDS PARK	Mature trees. Raised banks. Wooden bollards. Metal bollards. Heavy duty metal vehicle access gates locked.	Y	Forced. Removed bollards. Removed trees. Broke locks on gates.	Site is already reasonably secure. Entry forced through damage in the past.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
PRIORY PARK	City Walls. Mature trees. Perimeter railings. Heavy duty metal vehicle access gates locked at night. Metal bollards.	N	N/A	Site is already reasonably secure. No history of incursions.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
AMPHITHEATRE	Majority of site enclosed by private properties. Two heavy duty gates and metal post and rail fencing provides security at access points.	Y	Grinded padlock off gate and drove onto site.	Site is already reasonably secure. Entry forced through damage in the past.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
BISHOPS PALACE	Site enclosed by private properties and city walls. Large metal gates for vehicle access at main entrance.	N	N/A	No additional security recommended.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
EAST BEACH GREEN SPACE	Site enclosed by sea wall, wooden fencing and vehicle access barriers.	Y	Grinded padlock off gate and drove onto site.	Site is already reasonably secure. Entry forced through damage in the past.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
BISHOPS WALK	Site enclosed by city walls and River Lavant. Western end provides vehicle access. Wooden post and rail and five bar gate deters access.	Y	Removed wooden fencing.	Site is already reasonably secure. Entry forced through damage in the past.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
MALCOLM ROAD	Site enclosed by garages and fencing. Fence and gate provides vehicle access.	N	N/A	No additional security recommended.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
BRANDY HOLE LANE/COPSE	Site enclosed by mature trees and fencing. Five bar gates provide vehicle access.	N	N/A	No additional security recommended.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
CENTURION WAY	Metal barrier provides access to southern section. Drop bollards provide access to northern section.	Y	Bollard removed.	Site is already reasonably secure. Entry forced through damage in the past.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SUMMERSDALE COPSE	The site can be accessed on one side from the highway.	N	N/A	No additional security recommended.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
KOSY KOTTS	Post and rope deters access from highway.	N	N/A	No additional security recommended.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
MARINE CAR PARK	Post and rail fence deters access from highway. Gate for vehicle access.	Y	Broke lock on gate and drove on to site.	Site is already reasonably secure. Entry forced through damage in the past.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
ST ANNES HILL	Wooden gate provides only vehicle access to site.	N	N/A	No additional security recommended.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
CHICHESTER CEMETERY	Private property, walls and hedges surround site. Metal gates at two main entrances provide vehicle access.	N	N/A	No additional security recommended.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
HAMPERS GREEN PETWORTH	Farmers fields surround site. Metal gates at entrance provide vehicle access.	N	N/A	No additional security recommended.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A