

## READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

26 JUNE 2018

### ITEM NO 11- ILLEGAL TRAVELLER ENCAMPMENT ON LAND AT PORTMAN ROAD

Councillor Lovelock to move:

This Council:

- Shares the concerns of local residents who have been severely inconvenienced by the illegal traveller encampment on land at Portman Road;
- Supports the action taken by Thames Valley Police under Section 61 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 to remove the vast majority of the illegal encampment from the land at Portman Road;
- Endorses the Council's action in obtaining a Court Order on 11 June 2018 to remove the remaining four caravans of the illegal encampment from the land at Portman Road;

The Council notes that Thames Valley Police was not able to remove the entire travellers' encampment from the Portman Road site because some of the land was classified as 'Highway' land and as such fell outside the jurisdiction of Section 61 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994;

This Council therefore resolves to authorise the Director of Environment & Neighbourhood Services:

- to carry out all the necessary action to change the designation of the Highway land at Portman Road, which was used as part of the illegal traveller encampment, in order that any future incursions onto or abuses of the land could be dealt with promptly under this officer delegation and the powers available to the Thames Valley Police;
- to investigate and assess the extent to which similar sites, to the one at Portman Road, exist within the borough, which could be exploited for illegal encampments and prepare a comprehensive list of these potential sites, with a view to them being considered for re-designation as non-highway land;
- to submit a report to the Policy Committee or Strategic Environment, Planning & Transport Committee to seek a re-categorisation of the identified sites, where appropriate, subject to any necessary consultation processes and Equality Impact Assessments, with a view to minimising any potential future delays in dealing with unlawful traveller encampments or other abuses of the land at the identified sites.