

Verwood Town Council –Tuesday 25 October 2011

District Councillor Lucy Clark

Purple Haze Mineral Extraction and Landfill

On 13 October the Leader of East Dorset District Council, Cllr Spencer Flower, along with the Mayor, other District/Town Councillors and members of the No2Purple Haze Campaign Group attended an extraordinary meeting of Hampshire County Council (HCC). He, along with members of the Campaign Group voiced concerns at the proposals for mineral extraction and subsequent landfill at the location in Ringwood Forest known as Purple Haze, details of which were included in the summer edition of East Dorset News.

Cllr Flower highlighted to HCC that if the proposal went ahead, it would have a lasting and detrimental impact on the local natural and built environment. This related to the close proximity of Verwood with over 14,500 inhabitants, Moors Valley Country Park and the Ebblake Bog, which is a rare and internationally designated acid mire.

Whilst HCC announced that it intended to continue onto the next stage of its consultation, some concessions to residents concerns had been made. The extension to the Blue Haze Landfill [site](#) has been removed from their plan and the Purple Haze [planned](#) extraction total has been halved from 8 million to 4 million tonnes, which moves the site a further 800 metres away from Verwood. The site has also been downgraded onto a reserve list of potential landfill sites, both of which have to be welcomed.

We are very disappointed that HCC has not stopped the [Minerals Extraction](#) plans for Purple Haze. However, we have managed to achieve a number of important concessions. This is not the end of the battle by any means and the next stage of consultation will allow East Dorset residents an opportunity to remind HCC of the many concerns they still further have with the amended Minerals and Waste plans. The District Council will continue to lobby for further changes and we are hopeful that more of our suggestions to be taken on board [before](#) the plan is published in its final form.

All Dorset Councils to discuss Gypsy and Traveller sites consultation

All local authorities have a statutory duty to provide enough Gypsy & Traveller sites to meet local need. East Dorset P&R Committee on Wednesday 28 September endorsed the recommendation for the extended period of public consultation, on proposed sites, planned to commence on the 18 November for 12 weeks.

The voting was not unanimous. Two members of the opposition were not willing to support the recommendation to consult with the Communities of East Dorset, to get the public views on the options identified by the Consultants. This would happen anyway before any decisions were taken by the Council. Each Planning Authority in Dorset is expected to deal with the matter within their own boundaries, otherwise the Police power to move unauthorised encampments will not be forthcoming.

All of Dorset's planning authorities are working with the County Council to produce a Development Plan Document (DPD) that will allocate permanent and transit sites to meet the county's needs for the next 15 years.

Each of Dorset's six Borough and District councils, plus the two unitary authorities of Bournemouth and Poole, will be meeting [some have met already] to endorse the public consultation process in November – when local people will have the chance to give their views on suggested sites.

Consultants Baker Associates have identified potentially suitable locations against strict criteria, before drawing up a shortlist of options for the Council. I must stress that these options have not been endorsed by the Council and that the Policy and Resources Committee were only asked to support the consultation process on the sites, not the sites themselves.

Having enough permanent and transit sites in the district will help the police use special powers to move Travellers who camp illegally on private or public land. It has been suggested that such provision can reduce problems with associated anti-social behaviour by having properly managed sites and limits the detrimental effects on travelling communities' health, education and well-being.

It is vitally important to strike a balance when fulfilling our obligations to meet the needs of both the settled and travelling communities.

Having obtained Member approval consultation, local residents, businesses, interest groups and travelling communities will be invited to find out more and have their say on the potential site options for each area. There will be a series of public exhibitions, supported by an online questionnaire and comments form.