

Deputy Mayor Kate Green  
By email: [Deputy.Mayor@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk](mailto:Deputy.Mayor@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk)

25th November 2024

**Re: Joint letter on the over-policing and violent restraint of Romany Gypsy and Irish Traveller children in Manchester**

Dear Deputy Mayor Kate Green,

As you are aware, there were numerous incidents of over-policing and violent restraint of Romany Gypsy and Irish Traveller children over the weekend in Manchester. These incidents are utterly deplorable and the victims and their families are experiencing significant distress, with concern and anger felt across the communities.

Greater Manchester Police prevented young Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers, who were visiting the City Centre for Christmas shopping, from entering the market and other shopping areas. We are appalled that an operational decision was made by Greater Manchester Police to subject young people and families to such humiliation, discrimination and racial profiling.

In addition to the criminalisation of Romany Gypsy and Irish Traveller children, police forced the young people onto trains out of the city with no clear plans or provisions in place to ensure these children would reach home safely, after being exposed to violent discrimination. As the Deputy Mayor for Safer and Stronger Communities, we are sure you will share our deep concerns about how these children were treated, and the lack of care for their safety.

For far too long, Romany Gypsy and Irish Traveller communities have faced over-policing, discrimination and race hate, and are disproportionately represented in the criminal justice system. What happened over the weekend is not an isolated event, but is a clear example of structural racism against Romany Gypsy and Irish Traveller communities. Incidents of racism have an ongoing and reverberating impact.

We hope you will support the need for a full investigation into Greater Manchester Police's decision-making and operational activities, as well as an apology for the distress and anguish caused to these children, their families and the wider Romany Gypsy and Irish Traveller communities. We hope to continue discussions on this

matter with you in the coming days, so that the incidents can be addressed, with an action plan developed to prevent further incidents of this nature.

Yours sincerely,

Sarah Mann, CEO, Friends, Families and Travellers  
Yvonne MacNamara, CEO, The Traveller Movement  
Dr Siobhan Spencer MBE, CEO, Derbyshire Gypsy Liaison Group  
Violet Cannon, CEO, York Travellers Trust & Chair of Moving for Change  
Betty Billington BEM, Chair of Kushti Bok  
Billy Welch and Bill Lloyd, organisers of Appleby Horse Fair  
Liza Mortimer, Project Manager, Travellers Times  
Ellie Rogers, CEO, Leeds GATE  
Jackie Duffy, CEO, Leicestershire GATE  
Debby Kennett, CEO, London Gypsies and Travellers  
Breege McDaid, Director, Irish Community Care  
Rev. Canon Dr. Nichola Chater, Chair of Gypsy Roma and Traveller Friendly Churches  
Rev'd Canon Jonathan Herbert, Chaplain to Gypsies, Travellers and Showmen  
Matt Smith, TravellerSpace  
Rev'd Roger Redding MBE, Chaplain to Gypsies Travellers and Showmen.  
Paul Boucher, CEO, Lincolnshire Traveller Initiative  
John Delahunty, Chief Executive, Innisfree Housing Association  
Brian Dalton, CEO, Irish in Britain  
Fionuala Bonnar, CEO, ICAP  
Danny Maher, CEO Ashford Place  
Patrick Morrison, Chief Executive, Irish Community Care Manchester  
Anthony Hanlon Chief Executive Leeds Irish Health & Homes  
Marie Norbury, CEO, Irish Chaplaincy