

Scrutiny Committee – 8th April 2008

10. Planning Enforcement Policy

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Peter Seib, Economic Development, Planning & Transport
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Purpose of the Report

This report informs members of the proposed new enforcement policy. The existing policy was adopted in 2000 and it now requires updating to reflect current working practises, legislation and procedures.

Action required

1. That the Scrutiny Committee consider the principles set down in the new policy.
2. That the Committee recommend the District Executive Committee formally adopt the revised Planning Enforcement Policy.

Report

This revised policy not only sets out what the Council will do, but also clarifies matters not within planning control.

A change of emphasis has been placed on the periods of action, to provide end dates by which matters will have been addressed, as opposed to running dates of action. This is designed to provide officers with greater flexibility in use of time, as well as being able to accommodate variations in levels of staffing, periods of leave or sickness and peaks of intense work, without the need to vary the policy.

The policy also addresses the increasing receipt of civil issues, neighbour disputes, complainants identity, and creates a clear audit trail for purposes of performance management. It is also considered the policy will reduce the prospect of instances of Ombudsman complaints and is better able to manage public expectation of the service.

The policy forms part of a revision of the enforcement procedure, which will also include a revised customer focused acknowledgement letter and new three fold simplified guide, similar to the leaflet for the Advertising Protocol previously considered by this committee.

An oral update will be given at the meeting on any outstanding internal consultations.

Background Papers: *Planning Enforcement Policy Draft Revision*
