

## Planning Enforcement Action Plan 2022

Issue	Education	Promotion	Systems	People	Comment	Timescale
Need to have a clear Planning Enforcement Policy	A clear policy will help both Members and the public understand what the service can and cannot do	Once produced, this will need to be available on the Merton Website and could also be mentioned in the Merton Newsletter	The Policy will set out clearly what systems should be followed to report a breach		A draft policy was produced as part of the last improvement plan but was not finalised. This will now be undertaken.	30 <sup>th</sup> April 2022
The Backlog is excessive and needs to be reduced	<p>Some cases that are reported/ opened are not breaches and we cannot take enforcement action but still have to visit.</p> <p>Publicising this will help to reduce this type of case being reported.</p>	The number and type of cases we are tackling and closing could be reported to demonstrate the amount and level of work we are undertaking	Improvements in the way we allocate cases and also close cases are underway. We are also now monitoring cases allocated and closed by officer and this individual information can be used to assist performance management	We have taken on an additional agency Enforcement Officer for a period of 6 months, purely to target the backlog paid for by the Your Merton Fund	The backlog is being actively managed and the various actions we are taking should see it being reduced down to a manageable level	To reduce the backlog by 50% by: 31 <sup>st</sup> Dec 2022

The Team has been without a team leader for some time until recently. The need for a permanent post holder needs to be assessed	A Team Leader will hold weekly meetings and ensure that the Team are fully aware of backlogs; targets; and achievements		A Team Leader will assist in managing systems such as reporting; closing cases promptly and managing performance within the Team.	A restructure of the Enforcement Team is currently underway. This will establish what the makeup of the Team needs to be to undertake the required work.	There is a heavy reliance on agency staff currently which is both ineffective and costly	30 <sup>th</sup> May 2022
Currently, certain enforcement notices e.g. Stop Notices can only be signed off by the Director/Assistant Director			The Schemes of Delegation and/or Management need to be reviewed with regard to who can authorise certain notices		Enabling the Head of Service in conjunction with the Team Leader to sign off Notices will speed up the process in urgent situations	31 <sup>st</sup> August 2022
Planning Enforcement can attract negative press	Need to ensure that all enforcement officers are fully aware and up-to-date on policy	Need to liaise with the Communications Team if we anticipate there might be negative press about an issue	It is very important to ensure that we operate in a way above reproach and back up actions with evidence and policy	Full training should be provided to all staff within the Team as procedures can vary by Borough	Full audit trail of action taken is essential to aid enforcement action / prosecution and to demonstrate we have acted proportionally	Ongoing
IT systems require improvement		Should be easier to establish if action has been taken on a site or the reasons for action	Currently very difficult to extract statistics. Also need to make information more accessible to the public.		Currently in discussions as to how we can improve our IT systems. Dependent upon sorting out M3 first.	30 <sup>th</sup> April 2023

Need to ensure that we get back to complainants and councillors after site inspections and not just before			We need to ensure that we have systems in place that require officers to feedback at set stages of the complaint and record this		We have already improved on feeding back to complainants and councillors to let them know outcomes. Need to establish set procedures	31 <sup>st</sup> May 2022
Liaison with other teams			A set template for liaison is being introduced	To be successful we need to liaise with other colleagues in Licensing; Highways; Planning; the SLLP (Legal); Communications and others	We currently informally liaise with relevant colleagues. Making this a set procedure will overcome delays and ensure all relevant people are contracted in a timely manner	31 <sup>st</sup> May 2022

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