

Planning Enforcement Ad Hoc Scrutiny Committee

Briefing Note: 5th November 2008

Prepared by the Assistant Director (Planning and Sustainability) and Head of Development Control on Key Objective (iv)

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(iv) To review the Council's processes and procedures to improve the handling of planning enforcement cases.

1. From the Minutes of the previous Scoping meeting, the purpose of the next stage of the process following this meeting is to gather evidence and conduct a review of the processes and procedures involved, to be presented together with recommendations for possible actions at the next meeting (15th December 2008). The intention is therefore to collect information and hold a series of workshops with staff to review the service 'As Is', mapping out current processes and procedures, and then to consider 'to be' scenarios to improve working practices or recourse allocation where benefits are identified.
2. In terms of current process and procedures, the guide to enforcement as posted on the Website sets out the process that the Authority follows. Other processes relate to section 106 agreements, Enforcement Notice appeals, logging new cases, closing cases, recording Enforcement Notices served. Processes were drafted out for new enforcement officers to follow in dealing with cases in 2006. Detailed guidance is available in the form of PPG 18 'Enforcing Planning Control', Circular 10/97 'Enforcing Planning Control', the Government publication 'Planning Enforcement Good Practice for Local Planning Authorities'. The Enforcement Officers have a clear and detailed knowledge of the operation of the planning system particularly relating to enforcement, as required by the current Job Description, and keep up to date on trends, issues and legislative changes in Development Control.
3. As has been produced for Development Control, the intention as part of the review of Enforcement was to provide a manual for enforcement staff to refer to for procedures and processes.
4. Once the review is completed and any new processes formulated, the manual will be produced and an enforcement policy/customer contract presented to Committee (along with the draft revised Development Control Customer contract) for adoption.