

REPORT TITLE: LOCAL ENFORCEMENT PLAN

9 OCTOBER 2019

REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER: Cllr Jackie Porter Built Environment and Wellbeing

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WARD(S): ALL (EXCLUDING THOSE IN THE SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY AREA)

PURPOSE

The Council has undertaken a review of its existing Local Enforcement Plan. This report sets out the work undertaken to date to prepare a new Local Enforcement Plan. This includes Parish Council and Member engagement to ensure Enforcement Priorities are understood and resourced to provide confidence in the Enforcement Service.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the Policy Committee are asked to endorse the Draft Local Enforcement Plan and comment on the priorities and engagement methods proposed.

1 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 1.1 The Local Enforcement Plan will deliver the services of the Enforcement Team within existing resources. The changes proposed reflect the Councils commitment to look innovatively at how we tackle alleged breaches of planning control to best direct resources.

2 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

- 2.1 The existing Local Enforcement Plan was last updated on 9th March 2017. Parish Councils and Members have been critical of the approach taken to enforcement particularly regarding the length of time taken to deal with enforcement investigations and the style of communication.
- 2.2 Officers have listened to that feedback and at the last Parish Forum on 5th March 2019 it was agreed that we would fully review the existing Local Enforcement Plan.
- 2.3 The Service Lead Built Environment also reported proposals for change to the Town Forum on 21 March 2019.
- 2.4 A focus group was then established, which was made up of a group of Parish Council volunteers to help the Council work through and shape a new Local Enforcement Plan. This group was made up of 5 Parish Councils, the Cabinet Member for Built Environment and Wellbeing, the Service Lead Built Environment and the Enforcement Manager.
- 2.5 This method of engagement enabled a greater understanding of the legislative framework within which Enforcement operates and the also an understanding of how Parish Councils operate.
- 2.6 The draft Local Enforcement Plan has been revised to take into account those comments, and now includes greater use of plain English (less planning jargon), and also has a flow chart setting out the main possible options in an enforcement investigation.
- 2.7 The Parish Councils involved in the workgroup have been very supportive of the work to date, and will act as advocates to the wider group.
- 2.8 A full Parish Forum is scheduled for the 19th November 2019 where the updated Local Enforcement Plan will be tabled for discussion.
- 2.9 It is also proposed that Members of the Town Forum (which is not represented by a Parish Council) are given an opportunity to comment on the document.
- 2.10 It is proposed that the final document will be approved by Cabinet.

2.11 The process is designed to ensure that Parish Councils and Members are fully engaged to ensure Enforcement Priorities are understood and resourced to provide confidence in the Enforcement Service.

3 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

3.1 A Local Enforcement Plan is recommended by national planning guidance. Engagement with Parish Councils and Members will have helped to ensure that the new Local Enforcement Plan is fit for purpose, is clear on how alleged breaches of planning control will be dealt with and how we communicate that with Parish Councils, Ward Members and complainants.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

Previous Committee Reports:-

None

Other Background Documents:-

Existing Local Enforcement Plan <https://www.winchester.gov.uk/planning/planning-enforcement/local-enforcement-plan>

Town and Country Planning Act 1990

National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Practice Guidance

APPENDICES:

Draft Local Enforcement Plan