

Planning Enforcement Review

Findings of The Review Team
1 – 5 October 2007

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Overview

- The Service
- The Objectives
- What we did!
- What we learnt!
- What we are looking to do!
- Any Questions?

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The Review Team

- Marcia Head - Development Control Team Leader
- Sarah Castle – Senior Planning Officer
- Sharon Whittaker – Planning Enforcement Officer
- Irene Hubbard – Enforcement Administrator
- Viv Evans - Corporate Director
- Matthew Evans – Head of Planning and Environmental Regulation
- Robert Jackson – Development Control Manager
- Kelly Handley - Facilitator
- Sue Kirkwood - Admin Support
- Cllr James Radley – Portfolio Holder for Planning

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The Service

The Planning Enforcement team investigate complaints about possible breaches of planning control. Some complaints turn out not to be breaches at all, some are determined not to cause harm in planning terms, some are resolved through negotiation and may result in the submission of retrospective planning applications but some do result in the service of a notice.

Planning enforcement is not a statutory function.

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The Objectives!

- Customer Focus
- Efficiency
- Priorities

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What we did!

Preparation work

- Meeting with staff members-SWOT analysis
- Benchmarking against other Authorities
- Customer survey

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What we did!

THE REVIEW WEEK

- Monday - Meeting (am) with internal stakeholders (pm) meeting with complainants
- Tues – Meeting (am) with external stakeholders – Evening meeting with members
- Wed - Visit to the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead
- Thurs – Reviewed info gathered and agreed outputs
- Fri – Presentation of findings / prepare improvement plan.

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What we learnt!

- We got some very positive feedback from all our different stakeholders groups and both parish councils and local agents feel that they have a good working relationship with us.
- Feedback from consultation and meetings identified a number of themes.

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6 themes Identified :

1. Role of the Parish Councils
2. Conditions – proactive enforcement
3. Publicity
4. More Staff
5. Joint working
6. Legislation

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Role of Parish Councils

- Meet with Parish Councils to discuss format of information (before Christmas)
- Suggest that each Parish nominate one representative and provide training for the reps (March 2008)
- Training event for members and pc's (March 2008)

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CONDITIONS

- Proactive monitoring. This will need additional staff. (Long term)
- Wording of conditions and number imposed. Look at in the context of the Development Control Review. Standard conditions reviewed within the last two years.
- Include the use of conditions in Member Training (March 2008)

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Staff

- Need to replace staff when they leave
- Reviewing structure, considering a “neighbourhood” team and a large-scale development team (decision next week)
- Potential for more legal support (November)
- More staff for proactive enforcement (Cabinet decision)

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Joint Working

- Location of teams, Environmental Health and Building Control are now in same department and Building Control to physically move to same floor (Jan 2008)
- Closer working will improve communication and knowledge of what's going on
- Seminar with Environmental Health/Licensing/Building Control Officers to clarify roles (Before Christmas)

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Publicity

- Press release on results of service review
- Use Hart News and press releases to publicise appeal wins and successful prosecutions
- Use of web site for publicity
- Ensure team member is trained to update web site

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Legislation

- Potential significant change to General Permitted Development Rights next year. Dependant on Central Government. Need to ensure that this change is planned for within Development Control.

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Summary

- We listened
- We answered questions and found out additional information as we went along.
- We have compared ourselves to another Authority
- We learned some new ideas.

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THANK YOU!
&
ANY QUESTIONS?

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