

Appendix 1

Rochford District Council

ENFORCEMENT CONCORDAT

Our Enforcement Services

Our Aims

The Council delivers a wide range of enforcement services aimed at improving and safeguarding the community.

Our Commitment

We are committed to the adoption and implementation of good enforcement, by carrying out regulatory services in a fair, open and consistent manner.

The Enforcement Concordat

To this end, Rochford District Council has adopted the principles of the Government's Enforcement Concordat and is working towards putting into place policies, procedures and plans that deliver effective, efficient, enforcement services. We acknowledge that this will take some time to fully implement.

The Needs of Citizens and Businesses

The Council recognises the needs of citizens and businesses and will work closely with them to help them comply with the law.

However, we will take firm action against those who commit serious offences or consistently break the law.

The enforcement of the law helps to protect the environment, promote a thriving economy and maintain a fair and safe trading environment.

The Principles of Good Enforcement

Standards

We will:

- Set clear standards of service and performance that the public and businesses can expect;
- Consult with business, the public and other interested parties;
- Publish our standards and measure our performance against the standards set;
- Recognise the need for confidentiality in certain cases.

Openness

We will:

- Provide information and advice about our enforcement services in plain language and distribute it as widely as possible;
- Be open on how we go about our duties, including how charges are set;
- Make ourselves available to discuss general issues, compliance failures and where problems are being experienced.

Helpfulness

We will:

- Encourage, advise and assist businesses and the public on compliance with the law since prevention is better than cure;
- Be courteous and efficient: Staff will identify themselves by name and provide a contact point for any future dealings with us.
- Strive to provide a speedy and cost effective service;

Complaints

We will:

- Deal with all complaints and representations in accordance with the Council's Customer Care and Complaints Procedure.

Proportionality

We shall ensure that we;

- Avoid unnecessary expense to business and the public by taking action that is proportionate to the hazard, risk and breach of law;
- Recover our expenses as far as possible from the offender;
- Take into consideration the circumstances of the case and the attitude of all parties;
- Make clear the difference between what is a legal requirement and what is recommended as best practice;

Consistency

We will:

- Carry out enforcement duties in a fair, even and consistent manner, whilst exercising discretion in individual cases;
- Adopt arrangements to promote consistency including liaison with other enforcement authorities and agencies;
- Underpin this aim through effective training and development of our enforcement officers.

Procedures

We will:

- Provide clear, simple advice and where necessary, confirm this in writing, ensuring that legal requirements are clearly distinguished from best practice advice;
- Before formal enforcement is taken, write and provide opportunity to discuss the circumstances of the case and, if possible resolve points of differences, unless immediate action is required;
- Where immediate action is considered necessary, give an explanation of why such action was required which will be given at the time and confirmed in writing with 5 working days;
- Where there are rights of appeal against formal action, give advice on the appeal mechanism which will be clearly set out in writing at the time action is taken (whenever possible, this advice will be issued with the enforcement notice).

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| <u>Chief Executive's Office</u> | 01702 318003 |
| <u>Directorate of Finance and External Services</u> | 01702 318001 |
| Financial Services | 01702 546366 |
| Revenues and Housing Management | 01702 318005 |
| Contracted Services | 01702 318122 |
| Housing, Health & Community Care | 01702 318045 |
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| <u>Directorate of Law, Planning & Administration</u> | 01702 546366 |
| Legal Services | 01702 546366 |
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| Administrative & Member Services | 01702 318135 |
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| Planning Services | 01702 318137 |

If you wish to comment on the enforcement concordat or require more information, please contact:

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