

LONDON BOROUGH OF RICHMOND UPON THAMES

ENFORCEMENT POLICY PRINCIPLES FOR DEVELOPMENT AND STREET SCENE SERVICES

The Enforcement Concordat is a Code of Practice between Government and local Councils. It sets out what businesses and others affected by regulation can expect from the Council's enforcement services. Richmond Council has signed up to the Concordat. This means all Services provided by the Council are committed to good enforcement practices and procedures. The Development and Street Scene service fully supports the principles of the current Concordat and will also take into account those emerging in the Government's 'Better Regulation' agenda when applying its enforcement policies.

This document outlines the general enforcement policy principles adopted by the department as a whole. In addition, there are separate documents detailing how these are specifically applied in each of its regulatory services.

1. Service Standards

- In consultation with business and other relevant interested parties, we will draw up and publish clear standards setting out the level of service and performance our clients can expect to receive.

2. Openness

- We will provide information and advice in plain language on the rules that we apply and will publicise this as widely as possible.
- Timescales will be specified, if relevant.
- We will be open about how we do our work, including any charges that we set and will consult with business, voluntary organisations, consumers and workforce representatives.
- We will discuss general issues, specific compliance failures or problems with anyone experiencing difficulties.
- The services will endeavour to be flexible in responding to customer needs by adapting the method of operation to suit the customer.
- Service leaflets, letters or other documents are willingly translated into other languages utilising the Language Line subscription Service. There is no additional expense to the customer for this service. We will also arrange for interpreters when necessary.

3. Helpfulness

- We consider that prevention is better than cure. Therefore, our role involves actively working with business and anyone else subject to regulation to advise and assist with compliance.

- We will provide a courteous and efficient service and staff will identify themselves by name, and display their photo-identification badge.
- We will provide a contact point and telephone number for further dealings with us.
- When more than one service is involved we will ensure that, where possible, we give you a single point of contact and that our services are effectively co-ordinated to minimise unnecessary overlaps and time delays.
- Officers will respond to enquiries in accordance with our published Service Standards.

4. Proportionality

- We will minimise the costs of compliance whenever possible, by ensuring that any action we require will be proportionate to the harm or risk.
- We will take particular care to work with small business and voluntary and community organisations so that they can meet their legal obligations without unnecessary expense.

5. Consistency and Quality

- We will carry out our duties in a fair, equitable and consistent manner.
- While our Officers will exercise judgement in individual cases, we will have arrangements in place to promote consistency and quality of work in accordance with the law and best practice.
- When considering prosecution, the services will take into account the guidance set out in the Code for Crown Prosecutors.

6. Procedures

- Advice will be put clearly and simply and confirmed in writing on request explaining why any work or action is necessary, over what period and the relevant legal requirements. If advice refers to best practice and not legal requirement this will be made clear.
- Before formal action is taken you will have an opportunity to discuss the matter and resolve points of difference, unless immediate action is required, (for example, in the interests of health and safety), or, if the officer is of the opinion that the provisions of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 and it's associated code of practice are applicable, particularly the provisions relating to cautioning alleged offenders.
- Where immediate action is required an explanation will be given at the time if a responsible person is present and confirmed later in writing.
- Where there are rights of appeal against formal action you will be informed of these in writing.

6. Working together and with others

- Our regulatory services will work with each other and outside agencies, such as the Police, sharing information and combining resources for selected joint enforcement initiatives.

7. Corporate priorities

- The Council sets out its main aims and objectives in its 'Community Plan' and these guide the key objectives in the annual Directorate and Departmental service plans. In this way the key priorities for action in each of our services are set out each year in their service plans and are directly related to the aims and objectives of the Council as a whole.

8. Complaints and compliments

- The Council has a comprehensive complaints/compliments procedure that is actively promoted. Leaflets explaining the procedure and containing a complaint/compliment form are available from all reception points, libraries and other public buildings, and on the Council's website.