

Comments from the Executive Director for City Regeneration on the recommendations of the Scrutiny Planning Enforcement Review Group Report

The undertaking of this Member led review in combination with the Business Improvement Project for this area of service delivery has been extremely helpful in identifying areas where improvement is required in relation to capturing and management of data, performance monitoring, together with effective communication of processes and procedures.

In broad terms all of the recommendations are accepted, noting in the detail comments below that further detailed work will be required in some cases. As a way forward it is proposed to combine the actions in response to the Review Group's findings with the action plan produced through the BPI exercise to form an integrated single action plan that can be implemented and monitored within the service area with feedback to Value and Performance Scrutiny Committee in six months time and following that on an appropriate basis.

The recommendations in the Review Group report are addressed in turn:-

(1) & (2) Agreed. - The need to develop and implement data requirements, systems, and performance criteria and targets has been identified and reflected in the action plan of the parallel Enforcement business process improvement (BPI) review. These are being considered and developed, to be completed by 31/07/10.

(3) Agreed. - The priorities for investigating alleged breaches of planning control set out in the Planning Enforcement policy are being reconsidered as per the action plan. To be completed by 31/07/10.

(4) Agreed.- Each Planning Committee to be informed on performance of enforcement service via a quarterly report, following implementation of the new processes. First instalment will report on performance for quarterly period of July to September 2010.

(5) Agreed – Customer information leaflets to be produced, website content to be reviewed, staff and member training to be provided on the enforcement service and process.

(6) Agreed – Improved communication with service users updating them on progress with their cases has been identified as one of the main areas to concentrate the development of the service.

(7) Agreed in principle to consider this suggestion in more detail – However assessment of benefits, weaknesses and resource implications to be carried out only once the redesigned enforcement processes have been implemented and embedded. To report on this matter in November 2010

(8) Agreed - It is anticipated that efficiencies achieved in terms of increased officer time capacity through the redesigned streamlined processes will be

absorbed by the incremental growth to the workload and the planned additional contact and communication with service users. However following the implementation and embedding of the redesigned enforcement processes, officers shall consider the implications of introducing an element of pro-active enforcement.

(9) Agreed – Senior management focus will continue. As it is evident from prioritising the enforcement BPI review there is commitment to develop and deliver structural improvements to planning enforcement as part of providing a credible and effective Development Management service, within the available resources.

Niko Grigoropoulos

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