

### Principles of Enforcement

1. Oxford City Council operates under various statutory and non-statutory codes of practice in respect of its enforcement activities:
2. The Council will have regard to the Regulators Code and statutory principles of good regulation. The Council's position is that the responsibility for compliance with the law clearly rests with duty holders, i.e. individuals and businesses.
3. Subject to any other legal requirements, we will ensure that we exercise our regulatory activities in a way which is:
  - i) Proportionate – our core duty is to protect the public and safeguard children and vulnerable adults from harm. Our enforcement activities will reflect the level of risk to the public and enforcement action taken will correspond to the seriousness of the offence. We will seek to resolve cases at the lowest level of intervention appropriate to the case.
  - ii) Accountable – the way we carry out enforcement activities will be open to public scrutiny, with clear and accessible policies, and fair and efficient complaints procedures. We will use enforcement activity to assist businesses and others in meeting their legal obligations without unnecessary expense and to support economic growth.
  - iii) Consistent – we will enforce the law in a fair, equitable and consistent manner with a view to maintaining public support for the Council's regulatory role. We will have regard to any action being taken by other bodies.
  - iv) Transparent – we will ensure that our advice to those we regulate is clear and reliable to help them understand their legal obligations and we will seek to raise awareness about what is expected of them and the need to comply. We will consider what action is appropriate for each regulatory matter and offender.
  - v) Targeted – We will seek to change the behaviour of the offender and eliminate any financial gain or benefit from non-compliance where practicable. Our resources will be focussed on higher risk enterprises and activities, reflecting local need and national and corporate priorities. We will seek to restore the harm caused by regulatory non-compliance where appropriate and expedient, and deter future non-compliance.

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### Decisions on enforcement action

4. We will take a graduated approach to enforcement, unless there are circumstances where more formal enforcement action is necessary.

5. We will have regard to statutory guidance and national codes of practice when considering enforcement action.
6. When deciding whether to prosecute The Council will have regard to the provisions of The Code for Crown Prosecutors, in particular the need for a realistic prospect of conviction and whether prosecution is in the public interest.
7. Individual regulatory services may supplement this policy by developing more specific and detailed service procedures based on statutory provisions.