

Compliance and Enforcement Board

Notes of a Virtual Meeting of the Compliance and Enforcement Board held on Microsoft Teams on the **25th January 2022**.

Present:

Cllr. Bell (Chairman);

Cllrs. Feacey, Forest, Spain.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 1.2(c) Cllr. Forest attended as Substitute Member for Cllr. Buchanan.

Apologies:

Cllrs. Buchanan, Shorter.

Strategic Development and Delivery Manager.

Also in attendance:

Cllrs. Campkin, Harman, Ledger.

Environmental Contracts and Enforcement Manager, Community Safety and Wellbeing Manager, Team Leader Planning Enforcement, Member Services and Ombudsman Complaints Officer.

1. Notes of the Meeting of 26th October 2021

1.1 The Board agreed the notes as an accurate record.

2. Environmental Crime Enforcement in Ashford

2.1 The Environmental Contracts and Enforcement Manager introduced this item and drew Members' attention to the key points within the report.

2.2 The Chairman said it was pleasing to see the work undertaken by the team and the progress so far, and he particularly noted the improved communications.

2.3 The Chairman opened up the item for discussion and the following comments were made:

- A Member wished to highlight the contribution through litter-picking efforts. He asked about the KCC public refuse site, and whether the current running methods were having an adverse effect on fly-tipping numbers. The Environmental Contracts and Enforcement Manager said that there was no evidence that this was the case. There had been an increase in the fee for disposal of building waste but this had not lead to an increase in unlawful disposals. The public appeared to

have accepted the new booking system, although there was still capacity to arrive at the site without pre-booking, and there was no indication that the current rules had led to an increase in fly-tipping.

- A Member commented that the graph of fly-tipping numbers was useful.
- A question was asked about abandoned shopping trolleys and whether it would be useful to record the number of trolleys being fly-tipped, and their origins. One Member suggested that large companies could be 'named and shamed'. The Environmental Contracts and Enforcement Manager said that it could be hard to identify the origin of abandoned trolleys, but officers would liaise further with the larger companies to seek to improve the current situation. He explained about the arrangements with Trolleywise, and it was suggested that local companies should be encouraged to sign up with the company if they had not already done so.

Recommendations/Actions:

That the update report be received and noted.

3. Anti-Social Behaviour in Ashford - Update

- 3.1 The Community Safety and Wellbeing Manager introduced this item and highlighted the key points within the report.

Recommendations/Actions:

That the update report be received and noted.

4. Planning Enforcement Update

- 4.1 The Team Leader Planning Enforcement introduced this item and drew Members' attention to the main points in the report.
- 4.2 The Chairman opened up the item for discussion and the following comments were made:
- A Member asked about the number of live investigations and noted that, although the last three quarters were similar, they had been the worse so far with a 25% increase on previous figures. The Team Leader Planning Enforcement confirmed that this was the case, although the team were working hard to keep the numbers stable at the moment. A question was asked about sufficient resources and the Team Leader Planning Enforcement responded that regular discussions were taking place regarding the vacant post, as well as the post currently filled by a consultant.
 - A Member said that planning enforcement was a contentious issue within communities. The Team Leader Planning Enforcement replied

that it was important that there was an general understanding and acceptance of the length of time needed to deal with cases to conclusion. It was suggested that there could be a better system of information available on the internet but the Team Leader Planning Enforcement explained that details of enforcement cases were confidential and it was not possible to publicise any more than the most basic information. A Member emphasized the importance of face to face meetings between ward members and officers, and said that this should not be replaced by any self-serve system. She agreed that residents struggled to understand the process and she considered that Members and residents needed continued communication from officers to appreciate the complexities of the process.

Recommendations/Actions:

That the update report be received and noted.

5. Date of Next Meetings

- 5.1 26th April 2022 at 10am
26th July 2022 at 10am
25th October 2022 at 10am

Councillor Bell (Chairman)
Compliance and Enforcement Board

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